

AMARSINGH COLLEGE



Library

Class No. 221-87

Book No. A 755H

Acc. No. 5110

181

45

SELECTIONS FROM
MATTHEW ARNOLD'S
POETRY

Edited by

RALPH E. C. HOUGHTON

Com. H6 72 21
METHUEN'S ENGLISH CLASSICS

**SELECTIONS
FROM MATTHEW
ARNOLD'S POETRY**

Edited by

RALPH E. C. HOUGHTON, M.A.

London

METHUEN & CO., LTD.

Bombay

**ALLIED PUBLISHERS AND STATIONERY
MANUFACTURERS, LTD.**

<i>First Published</i>	.	.	.	.	.	<i>September 25th</i>	<i>1924</i>
<i>Second Edition (English Classics)</i>	.	.	.	.	.	<i>December 4th</i>	<i>1924</i>
<i>Third Edition</i> ( " " )	.	.	.	.	.	<i>August</i>	<i>1926</i>
<i>Fourth Edition</i> ( " " )	.	.	.	.	.	<i>September</i>	<i>1926</i>
<i>Fifth Edition</i> ( " " )	.	.	.	.	.	<i>October</i>	<i>1926</i>
<i>Sixth Edition</i> ( " " )	.	.	.	.	.	<i>November</i>	<i>1926</i>
<i>Seventh Edition</i>( " " )	.	.	.	.	.	<i>February</i>	<i>1927</i>
<i>Eighth Edition</i> ( " " )	.	.	.	.	.	<i>July</i>	<i>1928</i>
<i>Ninth Edition</i> ( " " )	.	.	.	.	.		<i>1941</i>

5210
 24-15/R 11-1
 PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

THE time has come to revalue the Victorians. For about a generation they have received ridicule and contempt from cleverness and youth. This attitude may have been necessary to enable their successors to rid themselves of their incubus ; it has not enabled those successors to produce literature on a level with that of the Victorian era. With the centenaries of their births ever falling due, the time is ripe to restore them to their rightful place ; perhaps this end may be served by republishing their best work, as Arnold did that of Byron and Wordsworth. This edition aims at presenting the best of Matthew Arnold's poetry. It includes a good many pieces, e.g. *Resignation* and *Westminster Abbey*, which have appeared in no previous selection. The best, that made by Arnold himself for the "Golden Treasury Series," is a plain text without even line numbering. An editor may be allowed to reaffirm that notes are not necessary to poetry and that the poems should be read before, and in the first place without, the notes ; but that the notes are intended to give some further interest and better understanding to those who have already enjoyed a poem. The poems are here arranged in the order of first publication, while the text is nearly always the latest up to 1867. The final arrangement and text (though the textual variations are mostly unimportant) will *only* be found in the complete copyright edition of the *Poetical Works* published by Messrs. Macmillan.

Arnold is not a suitable poet for boys or girls under about sixteen ; for those over that age he is one of the most valuable authors open to study, more especially if the pupils are not already receiving that discipline

in taste and style which classical literature gives. Considerations of space forbid, even were it desirable, any attempt to explain what is clear to an intelligent person above that age. As a rule no explanation of what can be readily found in an English Dictionary is given. My aim has been to concentrate on the literary side and to curtail notes on extraneous subjects dealt with by others adequately, e.g. the geography of *Sohrab and Rustum* and the Oxford poems.

R. HOUGHTON

18 DEAN'S YARD, WESTMINSTER
January 1924

NOTE

Tristram and Iseult, included in the original selection for this book, was finally excluded to save space. In the opinion of the editor that poem also belongs to 'the best of Matthew Arnold's poetry.'

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	V
INTRODUCTION	I
A NOTE ON BOOKS	7
SELECTED POEMS :	
Sonnet	11
Mycerinus	11
To a Friend	15
The Strayed Reveller	16
Shakespeare	25
To an Independent Preacher	25
To a Republican Friend	26
Continued	26
To my Friends who ridiculed a tender leave-taking	27
The Voice	29
Stagirius	30
The Forsaken Merman	32
In Utrumque Paratus	36
✓ Resignation. To Fausta	38
Cadmus and Harmonia	45
Apollo Musagetes	47
Too Late	48
On the Rhine	49
Longing	50
The Lake	50
Parting	51
Absence	54
Isolation	54

	PAGE
Youth's Agitations	55
Lines written by a Death-bed	56
✓ Memorial Verses	57
✓ Self-Dependence	59
✓ A Summer Night	60
✓ The Buried Life	63
A Farewell	66
Lines written in Kensington Gardens	69
Revolutions	70
The Youth of Nature	71
Morality	75
Progress	76
The Future	78
Sohrab and Rustum	81
Philomela	105
The Church of Brou. III	106
The Neckan	107
A Dream	109
Requiescat	110
The Scholar Gipsy	111
✓ Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse	118
✓ To Marguerite	125
✓ St. Brandan	126
A Southern Night	129
✓ Thyrsis	133
✓ A Picture at Newstead	141
Rachel. III	141
East London	142
West London	142
Anti-Desperation	143
Immortality	143

CONTENTS

ix

	PAGE
Worldly Place	144
The Divinity	145
The Good Shepherd with the Kid	145
Austerity of Poetry	146
Monica's Last Prayer	146
Calais Sands	147
✓✓✓ Dover Beach	148
The Terrace at Berne	149
Stanzas composed at Carnac	151
Palladium	153
The Last Word	154
A Wish	154
Rugby Chapel	156
Obermann Once More	162
Westminster Abbey	173
NOTES	183

"The importance of reading, not slight stuff to get through the time but the best that has been written, forces itself upon me more and more every year I live ; it is living in good company, the best company, and people are generally quite keen enough, or too keen, about doing that, yet they will not do it in the simplest and most innocent manner by reading."—*Letters of Matthew Arnold*, Vol. II, p. 227.

INTRODUCTION

"O nature strangely blest ; light petulance
Of airy laughter ; buoyant ease urbane
Of world and youth ; the lucid lips of France ;
Some breath of Byron's sick romantic pain,
Dispassionate, purged ; bright cynic edged disdain
Of Heine, clean, unpoignant ; peace austere,
Wordsworth's high woodland peace, unrapturous, sane ;
Goethe's grave calm Olympian ; Attic clear
Vision, and wistful doubt and Stoic will severe."

From *Corydon* by R. Fanshawe.

MATTHEW ARNOLD was born on Christmas Eve, 1822, at Laleham on the Thames. He was the eldest son of Thomas Arnold, who in 1828 became head master of Rugby ; the Doctor is a figure not altogether unknown to readers of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. After a short time at Winchester, Matthew Arnold was moved to Rugby in 1837 to be under his father's eye. Here he won the school verse prize with his *Alaric at Rome*. He won a scholarship at Balliol College, Oxford, took a second in "Greats" but obtained the Newdigate with *Cromwell* and a fellowship at Oriel, recently at the height of its fame. In those days men who wished to remain teaching at Oxford usually took holy orders ; and, apart from other considerations Arnold probably considered himself too unorthodox for that step. After teaching a short time at Rugby Arnold became private secretary to the Marquis of Lansdowne ; he held this position for four years, during which at least half his poetry was written. In 1851 he was appointed by his chief to an inspectorship of schools, a post which enabled him to marry in the same year Frances Lucy Wightman, the daughter of a judge. The marriage was a very happy one and seems more than anything else to have delivered Arnold from the melancholy and excessive introspection of his early poems. He had four sons and two daughters, but three of the sons died young. *The Letters of Matthew Arnold* give abundant evidence of his affection for his wife, his mother, his sisters,

and his children. Arnold remained an Inspector of Schools till he retired in 1883; he was also Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1857-1867. The Arnolds lived first in London, then at Harrow, and finally at Cobham. Arnold died suddenly from a heart-stroke in April, 1888. The middle and latter half of his life was chiefly occupied with criticism, literary and theological, which does not fall to be considered here.

The chief influences on Arnold's mind were, to put them in an abstract form, Hebraism, Hellenism, and Nature. Each of these must be considered separately. There was, first, the strict conscience, the earnest moral training which Dr. Arnold strove to inculcate in all his pupils. Occasionally, as with Clough, this may have made an unusually conscientious boy too serious for his years (so much only may be allowed to the distorted if not malicious picture of Dr. Arnold in Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*); but Arnold's capacity for enjoyment does not seem to have been impaired by his father's influence. Always, however, he preserved a serious attitude to life. Poetry was for him a criticism of life, and he had little sympathy with the foolish formula of the æsthetic school—"art for art's sake." He was not endowed with great appreciation of art except as the vehicle of thought; instrumental music, and pure song in poetry, left him cold, and he was notoriously unjust to Shelley. This is the side on which his own poetry is least strong, just as it is strongest on the side of thought. We may see from the *Note Books* how constantly the Bible, in Latin as well as English, was in his mind, and it influenced his style as well as his thought. *Matthew Arnold's Note Books*, published in 1902, have been well said to constitute "for some readers the very best book for daily use at such a time as Lent that has been published in the last forty years"; and we may conclude this subject with the testimony of a very different character, Swinburne, "I cannot count the hours of pure and high pleasure, I cannot reckon the help and guidance in thought and work, which I owe to him as to all other real and noble artists whose influence it was my fortune to feel when most susceptible of influence, and least conscious of it, and most in want."

We know from the *Letters* that Wordsworth and Goethe

were the two modern poets whom Arnold valued most. In *Obermann* he analyses the distinctive features of these his two masters ; and it may be said that he himself combines them in no small degree. Like Goethe, " he laid his finger on the place, And said thou ailest here and here " to his countrymen ; and like Wordsworth " he laid us on the cool lap of earth " and shed around us " the freshness of the early world." Arnold describes the spiritual pangs of his age and prescribes Nature's refreshments. But Arnold's feeling for Nature is more like that of the Greek idylls than like Wordsworth ; where Wordsworth connects, Arnold separates nature and man. Arnold flies to Nature in holiday mood, as Milton does in *L'Allegro*. Arnold was not a solitary like Wordsworth ; he was fond of society and would by no means have been satisfied with the country life that suited his master. During his headmastership of Rugby Dr. Arnold and his family spent most of the holidays at Fox How, a house which he had built about half-way between Ambleside and Rydal on the west bank of the Rothay. Wordsworth was still living at Grasmere, and the work of " the Lake school " in reopening men's minds to the beauties of Nature, especially in her wilder aspects, was still recent. Matthew Arnold came to love the mountains in those days, and references to them are frequent in his poetry from *Parting* to *The Terrace at Berne*. One of the walks with Dr. Arnold is described in *Resignation*, and in Clough's *Letters* is reference to a holiday with " Matt " in the Lakes in 1844. It was, however, for the Thames valley that Arnold did what Wordsworth did for the Lakes. The poetry of Arnold is full of careful and loving description of Nature. " It is here natural to think of Tennyson ; and while both poets are at their best in this kind of work, Tennyson, with his concentrated vision, gives us at the end of it, the pleasure of ' many a golden phrase ' always a little curious ; but Matthew Arnold is the more transparent in his language, and so makes us think less about the words and more of the objects. . . . But with all their differences the two poets, considered as painters, have this in common, that they are more English than anybody, as English as Constable " (Elton). In his descriptions of Nature, as well as elsewhere, the vividness, truth, and beauty of

Arnold's epithets are noteworthy (e.g. "uncrumpling fern," "green-muffled hills," "moon-blanch'd turf"). Arnold, as he himself said of the classics, "wrote with his eye on the object."

Arnold had managed to pass ten years or more in the "grand old fortifying classical curriculum" without losing sight of the fact that the classics are first and foremost great literature, and their writers human beings. To some present critics of a classical education this may seem almost incredible; but the truth seems to be that "gerund grinding" neither creates a taste for the best in literature, nor destroys it when it is present. His knowledge of English literature, which appears to have been confined to the chief authors, must have been mostly added after schooldays. In the sonnet *To a Friend* Arnold points out what the classics were to him, and so they continued to be his constant friends and companions all through his life. (In Lord Morley's *Recollections* one may notice how they played the same part to another mind in some ways as akin to Arnold's as it was appreciative of his poetry.) Some of the places where the influence of Greek and Roman writers may be seen in detail in Arnold's poetry are pointed out in the notes; and for this subject the writer may be allowed to refer to his Oxford prize essay *The Influence of the Classics on the Poetry of Matthew Arnold* (Blackwell, 2s. 6d.). This does not mean that a reader must know Latin or Greek literature to enjoy or to understand Arnold; but merely that those who can recognize an allusion or a turn of phrase from the classics may receive the additional pleasure which recognition and association bring. It is more important here to realize what is the general similarity between Arnold and the classics. For those who do not know Latin or Greek may obtain a better idea of the *style* of the great classical authors from Arnold's poetry than from reading translations of the classics themselves. This is almost as true of poems where the subject is modern as of those where it is ancient; of *Requiescat* as much as *Mycerinus*, of *Westminster Abbey* as much as *Merope*. Newman said that the classics were distinguished by "a sad earnestness and vivid exactness"; these phrases might have been invented to describe Arnold's poetry. One may miss the robust

optimism of Browning, the "jewels five words long" of Tennyson, but there is sufficient compensation in the strength and clarity, the purity of tone and colour in Arnold's poetry to put him alone on a level with these two masters of Victorian poetry.

"My poems represent, on the whole, the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century, and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is, and interested in the literary productions which reflect it. It might be fairly urged that I have less poetical sentiment than Tennyson, and less intellectual vigour and abundance than Browning; yet, because I have perhaps more of a fusion of the two than either of them, and have more regularly applied that fusion to the main line of modern development, I am likely enough to have my turn, as they have had theirs." Arnold was ever his own best critic, and not least so here. These words occur in a letter to his mother written in 1869, that is to say, two years after all the poems in this selection except *Westminster Abbey* had been published. During the preceding twenty-five years he had felt within himself something of the same turmoil that he saw in the world about him. His poetry shows his disillusionments as to politics (*To a Republican Friend*, etc.), love (the *Switzerland* series), and religion (*Dover Beach*, etc.). The disillusionment and melancholy is complete in *Empedocles*, but Arnold was saved from the fate of the Sicilian philosopher by hard work, vigorous self-discipline against his melancholy, and a happy marriage. By the time of *New Poems* (1867) he is far less self-centred, and as he became a happier man he found less need to express his emotions in poetry; and a reader of the *Letters* may come away with the feeling that there were few happier or more useful lives in that generation.

Arnold analysed the spirit of George Sand into "a cry of agony and revolt, the trust in nature and beauty, the aspiration towards a purged and renewed human society." It would be hard to find a better analysis of the themes of his own poetry. The main task of his life, prose as well as poetry, was "to make aristocratic tastes prevail in a world which was becoming rapidly democratic. Radical democrats, bent on extolling middle-class virtues, and

popular orators who go about persuading the people that the fruits of culture are green grapes, sought, and still seek, to thrust him aside as 'a high priest of the kid glove persuasion.' But he, in his fashion, was as worldly, as positive, as aggressive and as progressive as his adversaries. He was better rooted in the past than they, and he intended to go with them into the future " (Sherman). " To make aristocratic tastes prevail "—which is after all only a taste for the best—what better reason could be given for the writing or the reading of poetry ?

A NOTE ON BOOKS

1. There has been no proper biography of Arnold, by his own wish. The only official source of information is *The Letters of Matthew Arnold*, 1848-1888, edited by his friend, G. W. E. Russell (2 vols., Macmillan, 1895). Most passages that throw any direct light on the poems are quoted in the notes to this edition; but most of the letters are later in date than his first two volumes of poetry.
2. The best general account is *Matthew Arnold: how to know him*, by Prof. Sherman (Bobbs Merrill, Indianapolis, U.S.A., 1917). Unfortunately this book is rather expensive and has to be obtained specially from America.
3. The most able criticism of the poems is G. Saintsbury's *Matthew Arnold* in the "Modern English Writers Series" (Blackwood, 1899); but only a small portion of the book deals with the poetry, and it is very unsympathetic to Arnold's ideas in general.
4. G. W. E. Russell's *Matthew Arnold* in the "Literary Lives Series" (Hodder & Stoughton, 1904), though it contains next to no discussion of the poetry, is a very sympathetic and interesting account of Arnold's ideas.
5. Two of the best chapters on Arnold in larger works are those in Hugh Walker's *The Greater Victorian Poets* and in O. Elton's *Survey of English Literature*, 1830-1880, Vol. I.
6. Selections, mainly designed for schools, but often containing useful notes, are those by G. C. Macaulay (Macmillan, 1896) and George and Leigh (Oxford, 1909).

SELECTIONS FROM
MATTHEW ARNOLD'S POETRY

SELECTIONS FROM MATTHEW ARNOLD'S POETRY

SONNET

ONE lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee—
One lesson that in every wind is blown ;
One lesson of two duties, serv'd in one,
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity ;
Of Toil unsever'd from Tranquillity :
Of Labour, that in still advance outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in Repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting :
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil ;
Labourers that shall not fail, when man is gone.

5

10

MYCERINUS

“ NOT by the justice that my father spurn'd,
Not for the thousands whom my father slew,
Altars unfed and temples overturn'd,
Cold hearts and thankless tongues, where thanks were
due ;
Fell this late voice from lips that cannot lie,
Stern sentence of the Powers of Destiny.

5

Like the broad rushing of the insurgent Nile ?
And the great powers we serve, themselves may be
Slaves of a tyrannous Necessity ? 40

Or in mid-heaven, perhaps, your golden cars,
Where earthly voice climbs never, wing their flight,
And in wild hunt, through mazy tracts of stars,
Sweep in the sounding stillness of the night ? 45
Or in deaf ease, on thrones of dazzling sheen,
Drinking deep draughts of joy, ye dwell serene ?

Oh wherefore cheat your youth, if this it be,
Of one short joy, one lust, one pleasant dream ? 50
Stringing vain words of powers we cannot see,
Blind divinations of a will supreme ;
Lost labour : when the circumambient gloom
But hides, if Gods, Gods careless of our doom ?

The rest I give to joy. Even while I speak 55
My sand runs short ; and as yon star-shot ray,
Hemm'd by two banks of cloud, peers pale and weak,
Now, as the barrier closes, dies away ;
Even so do past and future entwine,
Blotting this 'six years' space, which yet is mine. 60

Six years—six little years—six drops of time—
Yet suns shall rise, and many moons shall wane,
And old men die, and young men pass their prime,
And languid Pleasure fade and flower again ;
And the dull Gods behold, ere these are flown, 65
Revels more deep, joy keener than their own.

Into the silence of the groves and woods
I will go forth ; but something would I say—
Something—yet what I know not : for the Gods
The doom they pass revoke not, nor delay ; 70
And prayers, and gifts, and tears, are fruitless all,
And the night waxes, and the shadows fall.

Ye men of Egypt, ye have heard your king.
I go, and I return not. But the will
Of the great Gods is plain ; and ye must bring 75
Ill deeds, ill passions, zealous to fulfil
Their pleasure, to their feet ; and reap their praise,
The praise of Gods, rich boon ! and length of days."

—So spake he, half in anger, half in scorn ;
And one loud cry of grief and of amaze 80
Broke from his sorrowing people : so he spake ;
And turning, left them there ; and with brief pause,
Girt with a throng of revellers, bent his way
To the cool regions of the groves he lov'd.
There by the river banks he wander'd on, 85
From palm-grove on to palm-grove, happy trees,
Their smooth tops shining sunwards, and beneath
Burying their unsunn'd stems in grass and flowers :
Where in one dream the feverish time of Youth
Might fade in slumber, and the feet of Joy 90
Might wander all day long and never tire :
Here came the king, holding high feast, at morn,
Rose-crown'd ; and ever, when the sun went down,
A hundred lamps beam'd in the tranquil gloom,
From tree to tree, all through the twinkling grove, 95
Revealing all the tumult of the feast,
Flush'd guests, and golden goblets, foam'd with wine ;
While the deep-burnish'd foliage overhead
Splinter'd the silver arrows of the moon.
It may be that sometimes his wondering soul 100
From the loud joyful laughter of his lips
Might shrink, half startled, like a guilty man
Who wrestles with his dream ; as some pale Shape,
Gliding half hidden through the dusky stems,
Would thrust a hand before the lifted bowl, 105
Whispering, " A little space, and thou art mine."
It may be on that joyless feast his eye
Dwelt with mere outward seeming ; he, within,
Took measure of his soul, and knew its strength,

TO A FRIEND

15

And by that silent knowledge, day by day 110
 Was calm'd, ennobled, comforted, sustain'd.
 It may be ; but not less his brow was smooth,
 And his clear laugh fled ringing through the gloom,
 And his mirth quail'd not at the mild reproof
 Sigh'd out by Winter's sad tranquillity ; 115
 Nor, pall'd with its own fulness, ebb'd and died
 In the rich languor of long summer days ;
 Nor wither'd, when the palm-tree plumes that roof'd
 With their mild dark his grassy banquet-hall,
 Bent to the cold winds of the showerless Spring ; 120
 No, nor grew dark when Autumn brought the clouds.
 So six long years he revell'd, night and day ;
 And when the mirth wax'd loudest, with dull sound
 Sometimes from the grove's centre echoes came,
 To tell his wondering people of their king ; 125
 In the still night, across the steaming flats,
 Mix'd with the murmur of the moving Nile.

TO A FRIEND

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind ?
 He much, the old man, who, clearest-soul'd of men,
 Saw the Wide Prospect, and the Asian Fen,
 And Tmolus' hill, and Smyrna's bay, though blind.
 Much he, whose friendship I not long since won, 5
 That halting slave, who in Nicopolis
 Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son
 Clear'd Rome of what most sham'd him. But be his
 My special thanks, whose even-balanc'd soul,
 From first youth tested up to extreme old age, 10
 Business could not make dull, nor Passion wild :
 Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole :
 The mellow glory of the Attic stage ;
 Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.

THE STRAYED REVELLER

The Portico of CIRCE'S Palace. Evening

A YOUTH. CIRCE

THE YOUTH

FASTER, faster,
 O Circe, Goddess,
 Let the wild, thronging train,
 The bright procession
 Of eddying forms,
 Sweep through my soul !

5

Thou standest, smiling
 Down on me ; thy right arm
 Lean'd up against the column there,
 Props thy soft cheek ;
 Thy left holds, hanging loosely,
 The deep cup, ivy-cinctur'd,
 I held but now.

10

Is it then evening
 So soon ? I see, the night dewes,
 Cluster'd in thick beads, dim
 The agate brooch-stones
 On thy white shoulder.
 The cool night-wind, too,
 Blows through the portico,
 Stirs thy hair, Goddess,
 Waves thy white robe.

20

CIRCE

Whence art thou, sleeper ?

THE YOUTH

When the white dawn first
 Through the rough fir-planks

25

THE STRAYED REVELLER

17

Of my hut, by the chestnuts,
 Up at the valley-head,
 Came breaking, Goddess,
 I sprang up, I threw round me
 My dappled fawn-skin :
 Passing out, from the wet turf,
 Where they lay, by the hut door,
 I snatch'd up my vine-crown, my fir-staff,
 All drench'd in dew :
 Came swift down to join
 The rout early gather'd
 In the town, round the temple,
 Iacchus' white fane
 On yonder hill.
 Quick I pass'd, following
 The wood-cutters' cart-track
 Down the dark valley ;—I saw
 On my left, through the beeches,
 Thy palace, Goddess,
 Smokeless, empty :
 Trembling, I enter'd ; beheld
 The court all silent,
 The lions sleeping ;
 On the altar, this bowl.
 I drank, Goddess—
 And sunk down here, sleeping,
 On the steps of thy portico.

CIRCE

Foolish boy ! Why tremblest thou ?
 Thou lovest it, then, my wine ?
 Wouldst more of it ? See, how glows,
 Through the delicate flush'd marble,
 The red creaming liquor,
 Strown with dark seeds !
 Drink, then ! I chide thee not,
 Deny thee not my bowl.

Come, stretch forth thy hand, then—so,—
 Drink, drink again !

THE YOUTH

Thanks, gracious One !
 Ah, the sweet fumes again !
 More soft, ah me !
 More subtle-winding
 Than Pan's flute-music.
 Faint—faint ! Ah me !
 Again the sweet sleep.

65

CIRCE

Hist ! Thou—within there !
 Come forth, Ulysses !
 Art tired with hunting ?
 While we range the woodland,
 See what the day brings.

70

ULYSSES

Ever new magic !
 Hast thou then lur'd hither,
 Wonderful Goddess, by thy art,
 The young, languid-ey'd Ampelus,
 Iacchus' darling—
 Or some youth belov'd of Pan,
 Of Pan and the Nymphs ?
 That he sits, bending downward
 His white, delicate neck
 To the ivy-wreath'd marge
 Of thy cup :—the bright, glancing vine-leaves
 That crown his hair,
 Falling forwards, mingling
 With the dark ivy-plants ;
 His fawn-skin, half untied,

75

80

85

THE STRAYED REVELLER

19

Smear'd with red wine-stains ? Who is he,
That he sits, overweigh'd
By fumes of wine and sleep,
So late, in thy portico ?
What youth, Goddess,—what guest
Of Gods or mortals ?

95

CIRCE

Hist ! he wakes !
I lur'd him not hither, Ulysses.
Nay, ask him !

THE YOUTH

Who speaks ? Ah ! Who comes forth
To thy side, Goddess, from within ?

100

How shall I name him ?
This spare, dark-featur'd,
Quick-ey'd stranger ?

Ah ! and I see too

His sailor's bonnet,

105

His short coat, travel-tarnish'd,
With one arm bare.—

Art thou not he, whom fame

This long time rumours

The favour'd guest of Circe, brought by the waves ? 110

Art thou he, stranger ?

The wise Ulysses,

Laertes' son ?

ULYSSES

I am Ulysses.

And thou, too, sleeper ?

Thy voice is sweet.

It may be thou hast follow'd

Through the islands some divine bard,

5216
115

By age taught many things,
 Age and the Muses ; 120
 And heard him delighting
 The chiefs and people
 In the banquet, and learn'd his songs,
 Of Gods and Heroes,
 Of war and arts, 125
 And peopled cities
 Inland, or built
 By the grey sea.—If so, then hail !
 I honour and welcome thee.

THE YOUTH

The Gods are happy. 130
 They turn on all sides
 Their shining eyes :
 And see, below them,
 The Earth, and men.

They see Tiresias 135
 Sitting, staff in hand.
 On the warm, grassy
 Asopus' bank :
 His robe drawn over
 His old, sightless head : 140
 Revolving inly
 The doom of Thebes.

They see the Centaurs
 In the upper glens
 Of Pelion, in the streams, 145
 Where red-berried ashes fringe
 The clear-brown shallow pools ;
 With streaming flanks, and heads
 Rear'd proudly, snuffing
 The mountain wind. 150

They see the Indian
Drifting, knife in hand,
His frail boat moor'd to
A floating isle thick matted
With large-heav'd, low-creeping melon plants, 155
And the dark cucumber.
He reaps and stows them,
Drifting—drifting :—round him,
Round his green harvest-plot,
Flow the cool lake-waves : 160
The mountains ring them.

They see the Scythian
On the wide Stepp, unharnessing
His wheel'd house at noon.
He tethers his beast down, and makes his meal, 165
Mares' milk, and bread
Bak'd on the embers :—all around
The boundless waving grass-plains stretch, thick-
starr'd
With saffron and the yellow hollyhock
And flag-leav'd iris flowers. 170
Sitting in his cart
He makes his meal : before him, for long miles,
Alive with bright green lizards,
And the springing bustard fowl,
The track, a straight black line, 175
Furrows the rich soil : here and there
Clusters of lonely mounds
Topp'd with rough-hewn,
Grey, rain-blear'd statues, overpeer
The sunny Waste. 180
They see the Ferry
On the broad, clay-laden
Lone Chorasmian stream : thereon
With snort and strain,
Two horses, strongly swimming, tow 185
The ferry boat, with woven ropes

To either bow
 Firm-harness'd by the mane :—a Chief,
 With shout and shaken spear
 Stands at the prow, and guides them : but astern, 190
 The cowering Merchants, in long robes,
 Sit pale beside their wealth
 Of silk-bales and of balsam-drops,
 Of gold and ivory,
 Of turquoise-earth and amethyst, 195
 Jasper and chalcedony,
 And milk-barr'd onyx stones.
 The loaded boat swings groaning
 In the yellow eddies.
 The Gods behold them. 200

They see the Heroes
 Sitting in the dark ship
 On the foamless, long-heaving,
 Violet sea :
 At sunset nearing 205
 The Happy Islands.

These things, Ulysses,
 The wise Bards also
 Behold and sing.
 But oh, what labour !
 O Prince, what pain ! 210

They too can see
 Tiresias :—but the Gods
 Who give them vision,
 Added this law : 215
 That they should bear too
 His groping blindness,
 His dark foreboding,
 His scorn'd white hairs.
 Bear Hera's anger 220
 Through a life lengthen'd
 To seven ages.

They see the Centaurs
On Pelion :—then they feel,
They too, the maddening wine
Swell their large veins to bursting : in wild pain 225
They feel the biting spears
Of the grim Lapithae, and Theseus, drive,
Drive crashing through their bones : they feel
High on a jutting rock in the red stream 230
Alcmena's dreadful son
Ply his bow :—such a price
The Gods exact for song ;
To become what we sing.

They see the Indian 235
On his mountain lake :—but squalls
Make their skiff reel, and worms
In the unkind spring have gnaw'd
Their melon-harvest to the heart : They see
The Scythian :—but long frosts 240
Parch them in winter-time on the bare Stepp,
Till they too fade like grass : they crawl
Like shadows forth in spring.

They see the Merchants
On the Oxus' stream :—but care 245
Must visit first them too, and make them pale.
Whether, through whirling sand,
A cloud of desert robber-horse has burst
Upon their caravan : or greedy kings,
In the wall'd cities the way passes through, 250
Crush'd them with tolls : or fever-air,
On some great river's marge,
Mown them down, far from home.

They see the Heroes
Near harbour :—but they share 255
Their lives, and former violent toil, in Thebes,
Seven-gated Thebes, or Troy :

Or where the echoing oars
Of Argo, first,
Startled the unknown Sea.

260

The old Silenus
Came, lolling in the sunshine,
From the dewy forest coverts,
This way, at noon.
Sitting by me, while his Fauns
Down at the water side
Sprinkled and smooth'd
His drooping garland,
He told me these things.

265

But I, Ulysses,
Sitting on the warm steps,
Looking over the valley,
All day long, have seen,
Without pain, without labour,
Sometimes a wild-hair'd Maenad ;
Sometimes a Faun with torches ;
And sometimes, for a moment,
Passing through the dark stems
Flowing-rob'd—the belov'd,
The desir'd, the divine,
Belov'd Iacchus.

270

275

280

Ah cool night-wind, tremulous stars !
Ah glimmering water—
Fitful earth-murmur—
Dreaming woods !
Ah golden-hair'd, strangely-smiling Goddess,
And thou, prov'd, much enduring,
Wave-toss'd Wanderer !
Who can stand still ?
Ye fade, ye swim, ye waver before me.
The cup again !

285

290

Faster, faster,
O Circe, Goddess,
Let the wild thronging train,
The bright procession
Of eddying forms,
Sweep through my soul !

295

SHAKESPEARE

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask : Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
That to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his stedfast footsteps in the sea, 5
Making the Heaven of Heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality :
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure, 10
Didst walk on Earth unguess'd at. Better so !
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

TO AN INDEPENDENT PREACHER

WHO PREACHED THAT WE SHOULD BE 'IN HARMONY
WITH NATURE'

" In harmony with Nature ? " Restless fool,
Who with such heat dost preach what were to thee,
When true, the last impossibility ;
To be like Nature strong, like Nature cool :—
Know, man hath all which Nature hath, but more, 5

And in that *more* lie all his hopes of good.
 Nature is cruel ; man is sick of blood :
 Nature is stubborn ; man would fain adore :
 Nature is fickle ; man hath need of rest :
 Nature forgives no debt, and fears no grave : 10
 Man would be mild, and with safe conscience blest.
 Man must begin, know this, where Nature ends ;
 Nature and man can never be fast friends.
 Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave !

TO A REPUBLICAN FRIEND, 1848

GOD knows it, I am with you. If to prize
 Those virtues, priz'd and practis'd by too few,
 But priz'd, but lov'd, but eminent in you,
 Man's fundamental life : if to despise
 The barren optimistic sophistries 5
 Of comfortable moles, whom what they do
 Teaches the limit of the just and true—
 And for such doing have no need of eyes :
 If sadness at the long heart-wasting show
 Wherein earth's great ones are disquieted : 10
 If thoughts, not idle, while before me flow
 The armies of the homeless and unfed :—
 If these are yours, if this is what you are,
 Then am I yours, and what you feel, I share

CONTINUED

YET, when I muse on what life is, I seem
 Rather to patience prompted, than that proud
 Prospect of hope which France proclaims so loud,
 France, fam'd in all great arts, in none supreme.
 Seeing this Vale, this Earth, whereon we dream, 5

TO MY FRIENDS

27

Is on all sides o'ershadow'd by the high
Uno'erleap'd Mountains of Necessity,
Sparing us narrower margin than we deem.
Nor will that day dawn at a human nod,
When, bursting through the network superpos'd 10
By selfish occupation—plot and plan,
Lust, avarice, envy—liberated man,
All difference with his fellow man compos'd,
Shall be left standing face to face with God.

TO MY FRIENDS

WHO RIDICULED A TENDER LEAVE-TAKING

LAUGH, my Friends, and without blame
Lightly quit what lightly came :
Rich to-morrow as to-day
Spend as madly as you may.
I, with little land to stir, 5
Am the exacter labourer.
Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

But my Youth reminds me—" Thou
Hast liv'd light as these live now : 10
As these are, thou too wert such :
Much hast had, hast squander'd much."
Fortune's now less frequent heir,
Ah ! I husband what's grown rare.
Ere the parting hour go by, 15
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

Young, I said : " A face is gone
If too hotly mus'd upon :
And our best impressions are
Those that do themselves repair." 20

Many a face I then let by,
Ah ! is faded utterly.
Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

Marguerite says : " As last year went, 25
So the coming year'll be spent :
Some day next year, I shall be,
Entering heedless, kiss'd by thee."
Ah ! I hope—yet, once away,
What may chain us, who can say ? 30
Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

Paint that lilac kerchief, bound
Her soft face, her hair around :
Tied under the archest chin 35
Mockery ever ambush'd in.
Let the fluttering fringes streak
All her pale, sweet-rounded cheek.
Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory ! 40

Paint that figure's pliant grace
As she towards me lean'd her face,
Half refus'd and half resign'd,
Murmuring, " Art thou still unkind ? "
Many a broken promise then 45
Was new made—to break again.
Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

Paint those eyes, so blue, so kind,
Eager tell-tales of her mind : 50
Paint, with their impetuous stress
Of enquiring tenderness,
Those frank eyes, where deep doth lie
An angelic gravity.

THE VOICE

29

Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

55

What, my Friends, these feeble lines
Show, you say, my love declines ?
To paint ill as I have done,
Proves forgetfulness begun ?
Time's gay minions, pleas'd you see,
Time, your master, governs me.
Pleas'd, you mock the fruitless cry
" Quick, thy tablets, Memory ! "

60

Ah ! too true. Time's current strong
Leaves us true to nothing long.
Yet, if little stays with man,
Ah ! retain we all we can !
If the clear impression dies,
Ah ! the dim remembrance prize !
Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

65

70

THE VOICE

As the kindling glances,
Queen-like and clear,
Which the bright moon lances
From her tranquil sphere
At the sleepless waters
Of a lonely mere,
On the wild whirling waves, mournfully, mournfully
Shiver and die.
As the tears of sorrow
Mothers have shed—
Prayers that to-morrow
Shall in vain be sped
When the flower they flow for

5

10

Lies frozen and dead—
 Fall on the throbbing brow, fall on the burning 15
 breast,
 Bringing no rest.

Like bright waves that fall
 With a lifelike motion
 On the lifeless margin of the sparkling Ocean
 A wild rose climbing up a mould'ring wall— 20
 A gush of sunbeams through a ruin'd hall—
 Strains of glad music at a funeral :—
 So sad, and with so wild a start
 To this long sober'd heart,
 So anxiously and painfully, 25
 So drearily and doubtfully
 And, oh, with such intolerable change
 Of thought, such contrast strange,
 O unforgotten Voice, thy whispers come,
 Like wanderers from the world's extremity, 30
 Unto their ancient home.

In vain, all, all in vain,
 They beat upon mine ear again,
 Those melancholy tones so sweet and still.
 Those lute-like tones which in long distant years 35
 Did steal into mine ears :
 Blew such a thrilling summons to my will ;
 Yet could not shake it.
 Drain'd all the life my full heart had to spill ;
 Yet could not break it. 40

STAGIRIUS

THOU, who dost dwell alone—
 Thou, who dost know thine own—
 Thou, to whom all are known

From the cradle to the grave—
 Save, oh, save. 5
From the world's temptations,
 From tribulations ;
From that fierce anguish
Wherein we languish ;
From that torpor deep 10
Wherein we lie asleep,
Heavy as death, cold as the grave ;
 Save, oh, save.

When the Soul, growing clearer,
 Sees God no nearer : 15
When the Soul, mounting higher,
 To God comes no nigher :
But the arch-fiend Pride
Mounts at her side,
Foiling her high emprise, 20
Sealing her eagle eyes,
And, when she fain would soar,
Makes idols to adore ;
Changing the pure emotion
Of her high devotion 25
To a skin-deep sense
Of her own eloquence :
Strong to deceive, strong to enslave—
 Save, oh, save.

From the ingrain'd fashion 30
Of this early nature
That mars thy creature.
From grief, that is but passion ;
From mirth, that is but feigning ;
 From tears, that bring no healing ; 35
From wild and weak complaining ;
 Thine old strength revealing,
 Save, oh, save.

From doubt, where all is double :	
Where wise men are not strong :	40
Where comfort turns to trouble :	
Where just men suffer wrong.	
Where sorrow treads on joy :	
Where sweet things soonest cloy :	
Where faiths are built on dust :	45
Where Love is half mistrust,	
Hungry, and barren, and sharp as the sea ;	
Oh, set us free.	
O let the false dream fly	
Where our sick souls do lie	50
Tossing continually.	
O where thy voice doth come	
Let all doubts be dumb :	
Let all words be mild :	
All strifes be reconcil'd :	55
All pains beguil'd.	
Light bring no blindness ;	
Love no unkindness ;	
Knowledge no ruin ;	
Fear no undoing.	60
From the cradle to the grave,	
Save, oh, save.	

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away ;	
Down and away below.	
Now my brothers call from the bay ;	
Now the great winds shorewards blow ;	
Now the salt tides seawards flow ;	5
Now the wild white horses play,	
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.	
Children dear, let us away.	
This way, this way.	

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

33

Call her once before you go.

10

Call once yet.

In a voice that she will know :

"Margaret Margaret !" Children's voices should be dear

(Call once more) to a mother's ear :

15

Children's voices, wild with pain.

Surely she will come again.

Call her once and come away.

This way, this way.

"Mother dear, we cannot stay,"

20

The wild white horses foam and fret.

Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down.

Call no more.

One last look at the white-wall'd town,

25

And the little grey church on the windy shore.

Then come down.

She will not come though you call all day.

Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday

30

We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?

In the caverns where we lay,

Through the surf and through the swell,

The far-off sound of a silver bell ?

Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,

35

Where the winds are all asleep ;

Where the spent lights quiver and gleam ;

Where the salt weed sways in the stream ;

Where the sea-beasts rang'd all round

Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;

40

Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,

Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;

Where great whales come sailing by,

Sail and sail, with unshut eye,

Round the world for ever and ay ?

45

When did music come this way ?
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
 (Call yet once) that she went away ?
 Once she sate with you and me, 50
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
 And the youngest sate on her knee.
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
 When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea. 55
 She said ; " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
 In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
 I said ; " Go up, dear heart, through the waves. 60
 Say thy prayers, and come back to the kind sea-caves."
 She smil'd, she went up through the surf in the bay.
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?
 " The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan. 65
 Long prayers," I said, " in the world they say.
 Come," I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
 We went up the beach, by the sandy down.
 Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town.
 Through the narrow pav'd streets, where all was still,
 To the little grey church on the windy hill.
 From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
 But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
 We climb'd on the graves, on the stones, worn with
 rains,
 And we gaz'd up the aisle through the small leaded
 panes. 75
 She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear :
 " Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here.
 Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone.
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

35

But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book.
"Loud prays the priest ; shut stands the door."
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.

85

Down, down, down.
Down to the depths of the sea.
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark, what she sings ; " O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy. 90
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well.
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully, 95
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand ;
And over the sand at the sea
And her eyes are set in a stare ; 100
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh, 105
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children.
Come children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder ; 110
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar. 115

We shall see, while above us
 The waves roar and whirl,
 A ceiling of amber,
 A pavement of pearl.

Singing, "Here came a mortal,
 But faithless was she.
 And alone dwell for ever
 The kings of the sea."

120

But, children, at midnight,
 When soft the winds blow ;
 When clear falls the moonlight ;
 When spring-tides are low :
 When sweet airs come seaward
 From heaths starr'd with broom ;
 And high rocks throw mildly
 On the blanch'd sands a gloom :
 Up the still, glistening beaches,
 Up the creeks we will hie ;
 Over banks of bright seaweed
 The ebb-tide leaves dry.

125

130

135

We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
 At the white, sleeping town ;
 At the church on the hill-side—
 And then come back down.
 Singing, "There dwells a lov'd one,
 But cruel is she
 She left lonely for ever
 The kings of the sea."

140

IN UTRUMQUE PARATUS

If, in the silent mind of One all-pure
 At first imagin'd lay
 The sacred world ; and by procession sure
 From those still deeps, in form and colour drest

Seasons alternating, and night and day 5
The long-mus'd thought to north south east and west
Took then its all-seen way :

O waking on a world which thus-wise springs !
Whether it needs thee count
Betwixt thy waking and the birth of things 10
Ages or hours : O waking on Life's stream !
By lonely pureness to the all-pure Fount
(Only by this thou canst) the colour'd dream
Of Life remount.

Thin, thin the pleasant human noises grow ; 15
And faint the city gleams ;
Rare the lone pastoral huts : marvel not thou !
The solemn peaks but to the stars are known,
But to the stars, and the cold lunar beams ;
Alone the sun arises, and alone 20
Spring the great streams.

But, if the wild unfather'd mass no birth
In divine seats hath known :
In the blank, echoing solitude, if Earth,
Rocking her obscure body to and fro, 25
Ceases not from all time to heave and groan,
Unfruitful oft, and, at her happiest throe,
Forms, what she forms, alone :

O seeming sole to awake, thy sun-bath'd head
Piercing the solemn cloud 30
Round thy still dreaming brother-world outspread !
O man, whom Earth, thy long-vext mother, bare
Not without joy ; so radiant, so endow'd—
(Such happy issue crown'd her painful care)
Be not too proud ! 35

O when most self-exalted most alone,
Chief dreamer, own thy dream !

Thy brother-world stirs at thy feet unknown ;
 Who hath a monarch's hath no brother's part ;
 Yet doth thine inmost soul with yearning teem.
 O what a spasm shakes the dreamer's heart——
" I too but seem ! "

40

RESIGNATION

TO FAUSTA

" To die be given us, or attain !
 Fierce work it were, to do again."
 So pilgrims, bound for Mecca, pray'd
 At burning noon : so warriors said,
 Scarf'd with the cross, who watch'd the miles
 Of dust that wreath'd their struggling files
 Down Lydian mountains : so, when snows
 Round Alpine summits eddying rose,
 The Goth, bound Rome-wards : so the Hun,
 Crouch'd on his saddle, when the sun
 Went lurid down o'er flooded plains
 Through which the groaning Danube strains
 To the drear Euxine : so pray all,
 Whom labours, self-ordain'd, enthrall ;
 Because they to themselves propose
 On this side the all-common close
 A goal which, gain'd, may give repose.
 So pray they : and to stand again
 Where they stood once, to them were pain ;
 Pain to thread back and to renew
 Past straits, and currents long steer'd through.

5

10

15

20

But milder natures, and more free ;
 Whom an unblam'd serenity
 Hath freed from passions, and the state
 Of struggle these necessitate ;
 Whom schooling of the stubborn mind

25

Hath made, or birth hath found, resign'd ;
These mourn not, that their goings pay
Obedience to the passing day.

These claim not every laughing Hour 30
For handmaid to their striding power ;
Each in her turn, with torch uprear'd,
To await their march ; and when appear'd,
Through the cold gloom, with measur'd race,
To usher for a destin'd space, 35
(Her own sweet errands all foregone)
The too imperious Traveller on.
These, Fausta, ask not this : nor thou,
Time's chafing prisoner, ask it now.

We left, just ten years since, you say, 40
That wayside inn we left to-day :
Our jovial host, as forth we fare,
Shouts greeting from his easy chair ;
High on a bank our leader stands,
Reviews and ranks his motley bands ; 45
Makes clear our goal to every eye,
The valley's western boundary.
A gate swings to : our tide hath flow'd
Already from the silent road.
The valley pastures, one by one 50
Are threaded, quiet in the sun :
And now beyond the rude stone bridge
Slopes gracious up the western ridge.
Its woody border, and the last
Of its dark upland farms is past : 55
Cool farms, with open-lying stores,
Under their burnish'd sycamores.
All past : and through the trees we glide
Emerging on the green hill-side.
There climbing hangs, a far-seen sign, 60
Our wavering, many-colour'd line ;
There winds, upstreaming slowly still
Over the summit of the hill.

And now, in front, behold outspread
 Those upper regions we must tread ; 65
 Mild hollows, and clear heathy swells,
 The cheerful silence of the fells.
 Some two hours' march, with serious air,
 Through the deep noontide heats we fare :
 The red-grouse, springing at our sound, 70
 Skims, now and then, the shining ground ;
 No life, save his and ours, intrudes
 Upon these breathless solitudes.
 O joy ! again the farms appear ;
 Cool shade is there, and rustic cheer : 75
 There springs the brook will guide us down,
 Bright comrade, to the noisy town.
 Linger, we follow down : we gain
 The town, the highway, and the plain,
 And many a mile of dusty way, 80
 Parch'd and road-worn, we made that day ;
 But, Fausta, I remember well
 That, as the balmy darkness fell,
 We bath'd our hands, with speechless glee,
 That night, in the wide-glimmering Sea. 85

Once more we tread this selfsame road,
 Fausta, which ten years since we trod :
 Alone we tread it, you and I ;
 Ghosts of that boisterous company.
 Here, where the brook shines, near its head, 90
 In its clear, shallow, turf-fring'd bed ;
 Here, whence the eye first sees, far down,
 Capp'd with faint smoke, the noisy town ;
 Here sit we, and again unroll,
 Though slowly, the familiar whole. 95
 The solemn wastes of heathy hill
 Sleep in the July sunshine still :
 The selfsame shadows now, as then,
 Play through this grassy upland glen :
 The loose dark stones on the green way 100

Lie strewn, it seems, where then they lay :
On this mild bank above the stream.
(You crush them) the blue gentians gleam.
Still this wild brook, the rushes cool,
The sailing foam, the shining pool.—
These are not chang'd : and we, you say,
Are scarce more chang'd, in truth, than they.

105

The Gipsies, whom we met below,
They too have long roam'd to and fro.
They ramble, leaving, where they pass,
Their fragments on the cumber'd grass.
And often to some kindly place,
Chance guides the migratory race
Where, though long wanderings intervene,
They recognize a former scene.
The dingy tents are pitch'd : the fires
Give to the wind their wavering spires ;
In dark knots crouch round the wild flame
Their children, as when first they came ;
They see their shackled beasts again
Move, browsing, up the grey-wall'd lane.
Signs are not wanting, which might raise
The ghosts in them of former days :
Signs are not wanting, if they would ;
Suggestions to disquietude.
For them, for all, Time's busy touch,
While it mends little, troubles much :
Their joints grow stiffer ; but the year
Runs his old round of dubious cheer :
Chilly they grow ; yet winds in March,
Still, sharp as ever, freeze and parch :
They must live still ; and yet, God knows,
Crowded and keen the country grows :
It seems as if, in their decay,
The Law grew stronger every day.
So might they reason ; so compare,
Fausta, times past with times that are.

110

115

120

125

130

135

But no :—they rubb'd through yesterday
 In their hereditary way ;
 And they will rub through, if they can, 140
 To-morrow on the selfsame plan ;
 Till death arrives to supersede,
 For them, vicissitude and need.

The Poet, to whose mighty heart
 Heaven doth a quicker pulse impart, 145
 Subdues that energy to scan
 Not his own course, but that of Man.
 Though he move mountains ; though his day
 Be pass'd on the proud heights of sway ;
 Though he hath loos'd a thousand chains ; 150
 Though he hath borne immortal pains ;
 Action and suffering though he know ;
 He hath not liv'd, if he lives so.
 He sees, in some great-historied land,
 A ruler of the people stand ; 155
 Sees his strong thought in fiery flood
 Roll through the heaving multitude ;
 Exults : yet for no moment's space
 Envies the all-regarded place.
 Beautiful eyes meet his ; and he 160
 Bears to admire uncravingly :
 They pass ; he, mingled with the crowd,
 Is in their far-off triumphs proud.
 From some high station he looks down,
 At sunset, on a populous town ; 165
 Surveys each happy group that fleets,
 Toil ended, through the shining streets ;
 Each with some errand of its own ;—
 And does not say, " I am alone."
 He sees the gentle stir of birth 170
 When Morning purifies the earth ;
 He leans upon a gate, and sees
 The pastures, and the quiet trees.
 Low woody hill, with gracious bound,

Folds the still valley almost round ;
The cuckoo, loud on some high lawn,
Is answer'd from the depth of dawn,
In the hedge straggling to the stream,
Pale, dew-drench'd, half-shut roses gleam :
But where the further side slopes down
He sees the drowsy new-wak'd clown
In his white quaint-embroider'd frock
Make, whistling, towards his mist-wreath'd
flock ;

Slowly, behind the heavy tread,
The wet flower'd grass heaves up its head.—
Lean'd on his gate, he gazes : tears
Are in his eyes, and in his ears
The murmur of a thousand years :
Before him he sees Life unroll,
A placid and continuous whole ;
That general Life, which does not cease,
Whose secret is not joy, but peace ;
That Life, whose dumb wish is not miss'd
If birth proceeds, if things subsist :
The Life of plants, and stones, and rain :
The Life he craves ; if not in vain
Fate gave, what Chance shall not control,
His sad lucidity of soul.

You listen :—but that wandering smile,
Fausta, betrays you cold the while.
Your eyes pursue the bells of foam
Wash'd, eddying, from this bank, their home.
“ Those Gipsies,” so your thoughts I scan,
“ Are less, the Poet more, than man.
They feel not, though they move and see :
Deeply the Poet feels ; but he
Breathes, when he will, immortal air,
Where Orpheus and where Homer are.
In the day's life, whose iron round
Hems us all in, he is not bound.

He escapes thence, but we abide.
Not deep the Poet sees, but wide."

The World in which we live and move
Outlasts aversion, outlasts love :
Outlasts each effort, interest, hope, 215
Remorse, grief, joy :—and were the scope
Of these affections wider made,
Man still would see, and see dismay'd,
Beyond his passion's widest range
Far regions of eternal change. 220
Nay, and since death, which wipes out man,
Finds him with many an unsolv'd plan,
With much unknown, and much untried,
Wonder not dead, and thirst not dried,
Still gazing on the ever full 225
Eternal mundane spectacle ;
This World in which we draw our breath,
In some sense, Fausta, outlasts death.

Blame thou not therefore him, who dares
Judge vain beforehand human cares. 230
Whose natural insight can discern
What through experience others learn.
Who needs not love and power, to know
Love transient, power an unreal show.
Who treads at ease life's uncheer'd ways :— 235
Him blame not, Fausta, rather praise.
Rather thyself for some aim pray
Nobler than this—to fill the day.
Rather, that heart, which burns in thee,
Ask, not to amuse, but to set free. 240
Be passionate hopes not ill resign'd
For quiet, and a fearless mind
And though Fate grudge to thee and me
The Poet's rapt security,
Yet they, believe me, who await 245
No gifts from Chance, have conquer'd Fate.

They, winning room to see and hear,
 And to men's business not too near,
 Through clouds of individual strife
 Draw homewards to the general Life. 250
 Like leaves by suns not yet uncurl'd :
 To the wise, foolish ; to the world,
 Weak : yet not weak, I might reply,
 Not foolish, Fausta, in His eye,
 To whom each moment in its race, 255
 Crowd as we will its neutral space,
 Is but a quiet watershed
 Whence, equally, the Seas of Life and Death are fed.

Enough, we live :—and if a life,
 With large results so little rife, 260
 Though bearable, seem hardly worth
 This pomp of worlds, this pain of birth ;
 Yet, Fausta, the mute turf we tread,
 The solemn hills around us spread,
 This stream that falls incessantly, 265
 The strange-scrawl'd rocks, the lonely sky,
 If I might lend their life a voice,
 Seem to bear rather than rejoice.
 And even could the intemperate prayer
 Man iterates, while these forbear 270
 For movement, for an ampler sphere,
 Pierce Fate's impenetrable ear ;
 Not milder is the general lot
 Because our spirits have forgot,
 In action's dizzying eddy whirl'd, 275
 The something that infects the world.

CADMUS AND HARMONIA

FAR, far from here,
 The Adriatic breaks in a warm bay

Among the green Illyrian hills ; and there
The sunshine in the happy glens is fair,
And by the sea, and in the brakes. 5
The grass is cool, the seaside air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain flowers
As virginal and sweet as ours.
And there, they say, two bright and aged snakes,
Who once were Cadmus and Harmonia, 10
Bask in the glens or on the warm seashore,
In breathless quiet, after all their ills.
Nor do they see their country, nor the place
Where the Sphinx liv'd among the frowning hills,
Nor the unhappy palace of their race, 15
Nor Thebes, nor the Ismenus, any more.

There those two live, far in the Illyrian brakes.
They had stay'd long enough to see,
In Thebes, the billow of calamity
Over their own dear children roll'd, 20
Curse upon curse, pang upon pang,
For years, they sitting helpless in their home
A grey old man and woman ; yet of old
The Gods had to their marriage come,
And at the banquet all the Muses sang. 25

Therefore they did not end their days
In sight of blood ; but were rapt, far away,
To where the west wind plays,
And murmurs of the Adriatic come
To those untrodden mountain lawns ; and
there 30
Placed safely in chang'd forms, the Pair
Wholly forgot their first sad life, and home,
And all that Theban woe, and stray
For ever through the glens, placid and dumb.

APOLLO MUSAGETES

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-bursts,
Thick breaks the red flame ;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-cloth'd frame.

Not here, O Apollo !
Are haunts meet for thee.
But, where Helicon breaks down
In cliff to the sea,

5

Where the moon-silver'd inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice !

10

On the sward at the cliff-top
Lie strewn the white flocks ;
On the cliff-side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks ;

15

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lull'd by the rills,
Lie wrapt on their blankets,
Asleep on the hills.

20

—What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom ?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flower'd broom ?

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme ?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime ?—

25

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine. 30
—The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows !
They stream up again !
What seeks on this mountain 35
The glorified train ?—

They bathe on this mountain,
In the spring by their road ;
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode ! 40

—Whose praise do they mention ?
Of what is it told ?—
What will be for ever ;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father 45
Of all things ; and then
The rest of immortals,
The action of men.

The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm ; 50
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm.

TOO LATE

EACH on his own strict line we move,
And some find death ere they find love :
So far apart their lives are thrown
From the twin soul that halves their own

ON THE RHINE

49

And sometimes, by still harder fate,
The lovers meet, but meet too late.
—Thy heart is mine!—True, true! ah true!
Then, love, thy hand!—Ah no! adieu!

5

ON THE RHINE

VAIN is the effort to forget.
Some day I shall be cold, I know,
As is the eternal moon-lit snow
Of the high Alps, to which I go:
But ah, not yet! not yet!

5

Vain is the agony of grief.
'Tis true, indeed, an iron knot
Ties straitly up from mine thy lot,
And were it snapt—thou lov'st me not!
But is despair relief?

10

Awhile let me with thought have done;
And as this brimm'd unwrinkled Rhine
And that far purple mountain line
Lie sweetly in the look divine
Of the slow-sinking sun;

15

So let me lie, and calm as they
Let beam upon my inward view
Those eyes of deep, soft, lucent hue—
Eyes too expressive to be blue,
Too lovely to be grey.

20

Ah Quiet, all things feel thy balm!
Those blue hills too, this river's flow,
Were restless once, but long ago.
Tam'd is their turbulent youthful glow:
Their joy is in their calm.

25

LONGING

COME to me in my dreams, and then
 By day I shall be well again.
 For then the night will more than pay
 The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times 5
 A messenger from the radiant climes,
 And smile on thy new world, and be
 As kind to others as to me.

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
 Come now, and let me dream in truth. 10
 And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
 And say—My love! why sufferest thou?

Come to me in my dreams, and then
 By day I shall be well again.
 For then the night will more than pay 15
 The hopeless longing of the day.

THE LAKE

AGAIN I see my bliss at hand;
 The town, the lake are here.
 My Marguerite smiles upon the strand
 Unalter'd with the year.

I know that graceful figure fair, 5
 That cheek of languid hue;
 I know that soft enkerchief'd hair,
 And those sweet eyes of blue.

Again I spring to make my choice;
 Again in tones of ire 10

PARTING

51

I hear a God's tremendous voice—
"Be counsell'd, and retire!"

Ye guiding Powers, who join and part,
What would ye have with me?
Ah, warn some more ambitious heart,
And let the peaceful be!

15

PARTING

YE storm-winds of Autumn
Who rush by, who shake
The window, and ruffle
The gleam-lighted lake;
Who cross to the hill-side
Thin-sprinkled with farms,
Where the high woods strip sadly
Their yellowing arms;—

5

Ye are bound for the mountains—
Ah, with you let me go
Where your cold distant barrier,
The vast range of snow,
Through the loose clouds lifts dimly
Its white peaks in air—
How deep is their stillness!
Ah! would I were there!

10

15

But on the stairs what voice is this I hear,
Buoyant as morning, and as morning clear?
Say, has some wet bird-haunted English lawn
Lent it the music of its trees at dawn?
Or was it from some sun-fleck'd mountain-brook
That the sweet voice its upland clearness took?
Ah! it comes nearer—
Sweet notes, this way!

20

Hark ! fast by the window 25
 The rushing winds go,
 To the ice-cumber'd gorges,
 The vast seas of snow.
 There the torrents drive upward
 Their rock-strangled hum, 30
 There the avalanche thunders
 The hoarse torrent dumb.
 —I come, O ye mountains !
 Ye torrents, I come !

But who is this, by the half-open'd door, 35
 Whose figure casts a shadow on the floor ?
 The sweet blue eyes—the soft, ash-colour'd hair—
 The cheeks that still their gentle paleness wear—
 The lovely lips, with their arch smile, that tells
 The unconquer'd joy in which her spirit dwells— 40
 Ah ! they bend nearer—
 Sweet lips, this way !

Hark ! the wind rushes past us—
 Ah ! with that let me go
 To the clear waning hill-side 45
 Unspotted by snow,
 There to watch, o'er the sunk vale,
 The frore mountain wall,
 Where the nich'd snow-bed sprays down
 Its powdery fall. 50
 There its dusky blue clusters
 The aconite spreads ;
 There the pines slope, the cloud-strips
 Hung soft in their heads.
 No life but, at moments, 55
 The mountain-bee's hum.
 —I come, O ye mountains !
 Ye pine-woods, I come !

Forgive me ! forgive me !
 Ah, Marguerite, fain 60

Would these arms reach to clasp thee :—
But see ! 'tis in vain

In the void air towards thee
My strain'd arms are cast.
But a sea rolls between us—
Our different past.

65

To the lips, ah ! of others,
Those lips have been prest,
And others, ere I was,
Were clasp'd to that breast ;

70

Far, far from each other
Our spirits have grown.
And what heart knows another ?
Ah ! who knows his own ?

Blow ye winds ! lift me with you !
I come to the wild.
Fold closely, O Nature !
Thine arms round thy child.

75

To thee only God granted
A heart ever new :
To all always open ;
To all always true

80

Ah, calm me ! restore me !
And dry up my tears
On thy high mountain platforms,
Where Morn first appears,

85

Where the white mists, for ever,
Are spread and upfurl'd ;
In the stir of the forces
Whence issued the world

90

ABSENCE

IN this fair stranger's eyes of grey
 Thine eyes, my love, I see.
 I shudder : for the passing day
 Had borne me far from thee.

This is the curse of life : that not
 A nobler calmer train
 Of wiser thoughts and feelings blot
 Our passions from our brain ;

5

But each day brings its petty dust
 Our soon-chok'd souls to fill,
 And we forget because we must,
 And not because we will.

10

I struggle towards the light ; and ye,
 Once-long'd-for storms of love !
 If with the light ye cannot be,
 I bear that ye remove.

15

I struggle towards the light ; but oh,
 While yet the night is chill,
 Upon Time's barren, stormy flow,
 Stay with me, Marguerite, still !

20

ISOLATION

YES : in the sea of life enisl'd,
 With echoing straits between us thrown,
 Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
 We mortal millions live *alone*.

The islands feel the enclasping flow,
 And then their endless bounds they know.

5

But when the moon their hollows lights
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing, 10
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour ;

Oh then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent ;
—For surely once, they feel, we were 15
Parts of a single continent.
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again !

Who order'd, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd ? 20
Who renders vain their deep desire ?
A God, a God their severance rul'd ;
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

YOUTH'S AGITATIONS

WHEN I shall be divorced, some ten years hence,
From this poor present self which I am now ;
When youth has done its tedious vain expense
Of passions that for ever ebb and flow ;
Shall I not joy youth's heats are left behind, 5
And breathe more happy in an even clime ?
Ah no ! for then I shall begin to find
A thousand virtues in this hated time.
Then I shall wish its agitations back,
And all its thwarting currents of desire ; 10
Then I shall praise the heat which then I lack,
And call this hurrying fever, generous fire,
And sigh that one thing only has been lent
To youth and age in common—discontent.

LINES WRITTEN BY A DEATH-BED

YES, now the longing is o'erpast,
Which, dogg'd by fear and fought by shame,
Shook her weak bosom day and night,
Consum'd her beauty like a flame,
And dimm'd it like the desert blast. 5
And though the curtains hide her face,
Yet were it lifted to the light
The sweet expression of her brow
Would charm the gazer, till his thought
Eras'd the ravages of time, 10
Fill'd up the hollow cheek, and brought
A freshness back as of her prime—
So healing in her quiet now.
So perfectly the lines express
A placid, settled loveliness; 15
Her youngest rival's freshest grace.

But ah, though peace indeed is here,
And ease from shame, and rest from fear;
Though nothing can dismarble now
The smoothness of that limpid brow; 20
Yet is a calm like this, in truth,
The crowning end of life and youth?
And when this boon rewards the dead,
Are all debts paid, has all been said?
And is the heart of youth so light, 25
Its step so firm, its eye so bright,
Because on its hot brow there blows
A wind of promise and repose
From the far grave, to which it goes;
Because it has the hope to come, 30
One day, to harbour in the tomb?
Ah no, the bliss youth dreams is one
For daylight, for the cheerful sun,
For feeling nerves and living breath—

MEMORIAL VERSES

57

Youth dreams a bliss on this side death. 35
 It dreams a rest, if not more deep,
 More grateful than this marble sleep.
 It hears a voice within it tell—
 "Calm's not life's crown, though calm is well."
 'Tis all perhaps which man acquires : 40
 But 'tis not what our youth desires.

MEMORIAL VERSES

APRIL, 1850

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
 Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
 But one such death remain'd to come.
 The last poetic voice is dumb.
 What shall be said o'er Wordsworth's tomb? 5

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
 We bow'd our head and held our breath
 He taught us little : but our soul
 Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
 With shivering heart the strife we saw 10
 Of Passion with Eternal Law.
 And yet with reverential awe
 We watch'd the fount of fiery life
 Which serv'd for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said— 15
 Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
 Physician of the Iron Age
 Goethe has done his pilgrimage.
 He took the suffering human race,
 He read each wound, each weakness clear— 20
 And struck his finger on the place
 And said—Thou ailest here, and here.—

He look'd on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power ;
His eye plung'd down the weltering strife, 25
The turmoil of expiring life ;
He said—The end is everywhere :
Art still has truth, take refuge there —
And he was happy, if to know 30
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress.
And headlong fate, be happiness

And Wordsworth !—Ah, pale ghosts ! rejoice !
For never has such soothing voice 35
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.
Wordsworth is gone from us—and ye, 40
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we.
He too upon a wintry clime
Had fallen—on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound 45
Our souls in its benumbing round :
He spoke, and loos'd our heart in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth ;
Smiles broke from us and we had ease. 50
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again :
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth return'd : for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead, 55
Spirits dried up and closely-furl'd,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah, since dark days still bring to light

SELF-DEPENDENCE

59

Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
 Time may restore us in his course
 Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force :
 But where will Europe's latter hour
 Again find Wordsworth's healing power ?
 Others will teach us how to dare,
 And against fear our breast to steel :
 Others will strengthen us to bear—
 But who, ah who, will make us feel ?
 The cloud of mortal destiny,
 Others will front it fearlessly—
 But who, like him, will put it by ?
 Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
 O Rotha ! with thy living wave.
 Sing him thy best ! for few or none
 Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

60

65

70

SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
 What I am, and what I ought to be,
 At the vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
 Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
 O'er the sea and to the stars I send :
 " Ye who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
 Calm me, ah, compose me to the end.

5

" Ah, once more," I cried, " Ye Stars, ye Waters,
 On my heart your mighty charm renew :
 Still, still, let me, as I gaze upon you,
 Feel my soul becoming vast like you."

10

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
 Over the lit sea's unquiet way,

In the rustling night-air came the answer— 15
 “Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *live* as they.

“Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
 Undistracted by the sights they see,
 These demand not that the things without them
 Yield them love, amusement, sympathy. 20

“And with joy the stars perform their shining,
 And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll.
 For alone they live, nor pine with noting
 All the fever of some differing soul.

“Bounded by themselves, and unobservant 25
 In what state God's other works may be,
 In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
 These attain the mighty life you see.”

O air-born Voice! long since, severely clear,
 A cry like thine in my own heart I hear. 30
 “Resolve to be thyself: and know, that he
 Who finds himself, loses his misery.”

A SUMMER NIGHT

In the deserted moon-blanch'd street
 How lonely rings the echo of my feet!
 Those windows, which I gaze at, frown,
 Silent and white, unopening down,
 Repellent as the world:—but see! 5
 A break between the housetops shows
 The moon, and, lost behind her, fading dim
 Into the dewy dark obscurity
 Down at the far horizon's rim,
 Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose 10

And to my mind the thought
Is on a sudden brought
Of a past night, and a far different scene.
Headlands stood out into the moon-lit deep
As clearly as at noon ; 15
The spring-tide's brimming flow
Heav'd dazzlingly between ;
Houses with long white sweep
Girdled the glistening bay :
Behind, through the soft air, 20
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread away
That night was far more fair ;
But the same restless pacings to and fro
And the same vainly throbbing heart was there,
And the same bright calm moon. 25

And the calm moonlight seems to say—
—“Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast
That neither deadens into rest
Nor ever feels the fiery glow
That whirls the spirit from itself away, 30
But fluctuates to and fro.
Never by passion quite possess'd,
And never quite benumb'd by the world's sway ? ”—
And I, I know not if to pray
Still to be what I am, or yield, and be 35
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork give. 40
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison wall.
And as, year after year,
Fresh products of their barren labour fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near, 45
Gloom settles slowly down over their breast.

And while they try to stem
 The waves of mournful thought by which they are
 prest,
 Death in their prison reaches them
 Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest. 50

And the rest, a few,
 Escape their prison, and depart
 On the wide Ocean of Life anew.
 There the freed prisoner, where'er his heart
 Listeth, will sail; 55
 Nor does he know how there prevail,
 Despotic on life's sea,
 Trade-winds that cross it from eternity.
 Awhile he holds some false sway, undebarr'd
 By thwarting signs, and braves 60
 The freshening wind and blackening waves.
 And then the tempest strikes him, and between
 The lightning bursts is seen
 Only a driving wreck,
 And the pale Master on his spar-strewn deck 65
 With anguish'd face and flying hair
 Grasping the rudder hard,
 Still bent to make some port he knows not where,
 Still standing for some false impossible shore.
 And sterner comes the roar 70
 Of sea and wind, and through the deepening gloom
 Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman loom,
 And he too disappears, and comes no more.

Is there no life, but these alone?
 Madman or slave, must man be one? 75
 Plainness and clearness without shadow of stain,
 Clearness divine!
 Ye Heavens, whose pure dark regions have no sign
 Of languor, though so calm, and though so great
 Are yet untroubled and unpassionate: 80
 Who, though so noble, share in the world's toil,

And though so task'd, keep free from dust and soil :
 I will not say that your mild deeps retain
 A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain
 Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd in vain ; 85
 But I will rather say that you remain
 A world above man's head, to let him see
 How boundless might his soul's horizons be,
 How vast, yet of what clear transparency.
 How it were good to sink there, and breathe free. 90
 How high a lot to fill
 Is left to each man still.

THE BURIED LIFE

LIGHT flows our war of mocking words, and yet,
 Behold, with tears my eyes are wet.
 I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
 Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
 We know, we know that we can smile ; 5
 But there's a something in this breast
 To which thy light words bring no rest,
 And thy gay smiles no anodyne.
 Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
 And turn those limpid eyes on mine, 10
 And let me read there, love, thy inmost soul.

Alas, is even Love too weak
 To unlock the heart and let it speak ?
 Are even lovers powerless to reveal
 To one another what indeed they feel ? 15
 I knew the mass of men conceal'd
 Their thoughts, for fear that if reveal'd
 They would by other men be met
 With blank indifference, or with blame reprov'd :
 I knew they liv'd and mov'd 20
 Trick'd in disguises, alien to the rest

Of men, and alien to themselves—and yet
The same heart beats in every human breast.

But we, my love—does a like spell benumb
Our hearts—our voices?—must we too be dumb? 25

Ah, well for us, if even we,
Even for a moment, can get free
Our heart, and have our lips unchain'd :
For that which seals them hath been deep ordain'd.

Fate, which foresaw 30
How frivolous a baby man would be,
By what distractions he would be possess'd,
How he would pour himself in every strife,
And well-nigh change his own identity ;
That it might keep from his capricious play 35
His genuine self, and force him to obey
Even in his own despite, his being's law,
Bade, through the deep recesses of our breast
The unregarded river of our life
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way ; 40
And that we should not see
The buried stream, and seem to be
Eddying about in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often in the world's most crowded streets, 45
But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life,
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
In tracking out our true, original course ; 50
A longing to enquire
Into the mystery of this heart that beats
So wild, so deep in us, to know
Whence our thoughts come and where they go.
And many a man in his own breast then delves, 55

But deep enough, alas, none ever mines :
And we have been on many thousand lines,
And we have shown on each talent and power,
But hardly have we, for one little hour,
Been on our own line, have we been ourselves ; 60
Hardly had skill to utter one of all
The nameless feelings that course through our
breast,

But they course on for ever unexpress'd.
And long we try in vain to speak and act
Our hidden self, and what we say and do 65
Is eloquent, is well—but 'tis not true :
And then we will no more be rack'd
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power ; 70
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call :
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey 75
A melancholy into all our day.

Only—but this is rare—
When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours, 80
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
When our world-deafen'd ear
Is by the tones of a loved voice caress'd,
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again : 85
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
And what we mean, we say, and what we would, we
know.

A man becomes aware of his life's flow
And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze. 90

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
 Wherein he doth for ever chase
 That flying and elusive shadow, Rest.
 An air of coolness plays upon his face,
 And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.

95

And then he thinks he knows
 The Hills where his life rose,
 And the Sea where it goes.

A FAREWELL

My horse's feet beside the lake,
 Where sweet the unbroken moonbeams lay,
 Sent echoes through the night to wake
 Each glistening strand, each heath-fring'd bay.

The poplar avenue was pass'd,
 And the roof'd bridge that spans the stream.
 Up the steep street I hurried fast,
 Lit by thy taper's starlike beam.

5

I came ; I saw thee rise :—the blood
 Came flushing to thy languid cheek.
 Lock'd in each other's arms we stood,
 In tears, with hearts too full to speak.

10

Days flew : ah, soon I could discern
 A trouble in thine alter'd air.
 Thy hand lay languidly in mine—
 Thy cheek was grave, thy speech grew rare.

15

I blame thee not :—this heart, I know,
 To be long lov'd was never fram'd ;
 For something in its depths doth glow
 Too strange, too restless, too untam'd.

20

And women—things that live and move
Min'd by the fever of the soul—
They seek to find in those they love
Stern strength, and promise of control.

They ask not kindness, gentle ways ; 25
These they themselves have tried and known :
They ask a soul that never sways
With the blind gusts which shake their own

I too have felt the load I bore 30
In a too strong emotion's sway ;
I too have wish'd, no woman more,
This startling, feverish heart away.

I too have long'd for trenchant force,
And will like a dividing spear ;
Have raised the keen, unscrupulous course, 35
Which knows no doubt, which feels no fear.

But in the world I learnt, what there
Thou too wilt surely one day prove,
That will, that energy, though rare,
Are yet far, far less rare than love. 40

Go then ! till Time and Fate impress
This truth on thee, be mine no more !
They will : for thou, I feel, no less
Than I, wert destin'd to this lore.

We school our manners, act our parts : 45
But He, who sees us through and through,
Knows that the bent of both our hearts
Was to be gentle, tranquil, true,

And though we wear out life, alas !
Distracted as a homeless wind, 50

In beating where we must not pass,
In seeking what we shall not find ;

Yet we shall one day gain, life past,
Clear prospect o'er our being's whole :
Shall see ourselves, and learn at last
Our true affinities of soul.

55

We shall not then deny a course
To every thought the mass ignore ;
We shall not then call hardness force,
Nor lightness wisdom any more.

60

Then, in the eternal Father's smile,
Our sooth'd, encourag'd souls will dare
To seem as free from pride and guile,
As good, as generous, as they are.

Then we shall know our friends : though much 65
Will have been lost—the help in strife ;
The thousand sweet still joys of such
As hand in hand face earthly life—

Though these be lost, there will be yet
A sympathy august and pure ;
Ennobled by a vast regret,
And by contrition seal'd thrice sure.

70

And we, whose ways were unlike here,
May then more neighbouring courses ply,
May to each other be brought near,
And greet across infinity.

75

How sweet, unreach'd by earthly jars,
My sister ! to behold with thee
The hush among the shining stars,
The calm upon the moonlit sea.

80

LINES WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS 69

How sweet to feel, on the boon air,
All our unquiet pulses cease ;
To feel that nothing can impair
The gentleness, the thirst for peace—

The gentleness too rudely hurl'd
On this wild earth of hate and fear :
The thirst for peace a raving world
Would never let us satiate here. 85

LINES WRITTEN
IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

In this lone open glade I lie,
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand ;
And at its head, to stay the eye,
Those black-crowned, red-boled pine-trees stand.

Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girdling city's hum. 5
How green under the boughs it is !
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come !

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy ; 10
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless active life is here !
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass ! 15
An air-stirr'd forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain sod
Where the tired angler lies, stretch'd out,

And, eased of basket and of rod,
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout. 20

In the huge world which roars hard by
Be others happy, if they can !
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurl'd, 25
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world,
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new !
When I, who watch them, am away 30
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass ;
The flowers close, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass, 35
The child sleeps warmly in his bed

Calm soul of all things ! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar ! 40

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give !
Calm, calm me more ! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.

REVOLUTIONS

BEFORE Man parted for this earthly strand,
While yet upon the verge of heaven he stood,

God put a heap of letters in his hand,
And bade him make with them what word he could.

And Man has turn'd them many times : made Greece,
Rome, England, France :—yes, nor in vain essay'd 6
Way after way, changes that never cease.
The letters have combin'd : something was made.

But ah, an inextinguishable sense
Haunts him that he has not made what he should. 10
That he has still, though old, to recommence,
Since he has not yet found the word God would.

And Empire after Empire, at their height
Of sway, have felt this boding sense come on.
Have felt their huge frames not constructed right, 15
And droop'd, and slowly died upon their throne.

One day, thou say'st, there will at last appear
The word, the order, which God meant should be.—
Ah, we shall know *that* well when it comes near : 19
The band will quit Man's heart :—he will breathe free.

THE YOUTH OF NATURE

RAIS'D are the dripping oars—
Silent the boat : the lake,
Lovely and soft as a dream,
Swims in the sheen of the moon.
The mountains stand at its head 5
Clear in the pure June night,
But the valleys are flooded with haze.
Rydal and Fairfield are there ;
In the shadow Wordsworth lies dead.
So it is, so it will be for ay 10

Nature is fresh as of old,
Is lovely : a mortal is dead.

The spots which recall him survive,
For he lent a new life to these hills.
The Pillar still broods o'er the fields 15
That border Ennerdale Lake,
And Egremont sleeps by the sea.
The gleam of The Evening Star
Twinkles on Grasmere no more,
But ruin'd and solemn and grey 20
The sheepfold of Michael survives,
And far to the south, the heath
Still blows in the Quantock coombs,
By the favourite waters of Ruth.
These survive : yet not without pain, 25
Pain and dejection to-night,
Can I feel that their Poet is gone.

He grew old in an age he condemn'd.
He look'd on the rushing decay
Of the times which had shelter'd his youth. 30
Felt the dissolving throes
Of a social order he lov'd.
Outliv'd his brethren, his peers.
And, like the Theban seer,
Died in his enemies' day. 35

Cold bubbled the spring of Tilphusa.
Copais lay bright in the moon ;
Helicon glass'd in the lake
Its firs, and afar, rose the peaks
Of Parnassus, snowily clear : 40
Thebes was behind him in flames,
And the clang of arms in his ear,
When his awe-struck captors led
The Theban seer to the spring.
Tiresias drank and died 45

Nor did reviving Thebes
See such a prophet again.

Well may we mourn, when the head
Of a sacred poet lies low
In an age which can rear them no more. 50
The complaining millions of men
Darken in labour and pain ;
But he was a priest to us all
Of the wonder and bloom of the world,
Which we saw with his eyes, and were glad. 55
He is dead, and the fruit-bearing day
Of his race is past on the earth ;
And the darkness returns to our eyes.

For oh, is it you, is it you,
Moonlight, and shadow, and lake, 60
And mountains, that fill us with joy,
Or the Poet who sings you so well ?
Is it you, O Beauty, O Grace,
O Charm, O Romance, that we feel,
Or the voice which reveals what you are ? 65
Are ye, like daylight and sun,
Shar'd and rejoic'd in by all ?
Or are ye immers'd in the mass
Of matter, and hard to extract,
Or sunk at the core of the world 70
Too deep for the most to discern ?
Like stars in the deep of the sky,
Which arise on the glass of the sage,
But are lost when their watcher is gone.

" They are here "—I heard, as men heard 75
In Mysian Ida the voice
Of the Mighty Mother, or Crete,
The murmur of Nature reply—
" Loveliness, Magic, and Grace,
They are here—they are set in the world— 80

They abide—and the finest of souls
 Has not been thrill'd by them all.
 Nor the dullest been dead to them quite.
 The poet who sings them may die,
 But they are immortal, and live, 85
 For they are the life of the world.
 Will ye not learn it, and know
 When ye mourn that a poet is dead,
 That the singer was less than his themes,
 Life, and Emotion, and I? 90

"More than the singer are these.
 Weak is the tremor of pain
 That thrills in his mournfullest chord
 To that which once ran through his soul.
 Cold the elation of joy 95
 In his gladdest, airiest song,
 To that which of old in his youth
 Fill'd him and made him divine.
 Hardly his voice at its best
 Gives us a sense of the awe, 100
 The vastness, the grandeur, the gloom
 Of the unlit gulf of himself.

"Ye know not yourselves—and your bards,
 The clearest, the best, who have read
 Most in themselves, have beheld 105
 Less than they left unreveal'd.
 Ye express not yourselves—can ye make
 With marble, with colour, with word,
 What charm'd you in others re-live?
 Can thy pencil, O Artist, restore 110
 The figure, the bloom of thy love,
 As she was in her morning of spring?
 Canst thou paint the ineffable smile
 Of her eyes as they rested on thine?
 Can the image of life have the glow, 115
 The motion of life itself?

"Yourselves and your fellows ye know not—and me
 The mateless, the one, will ye know?
 Will ye scan me, and read me, and tell
 Of the thoughts that ferment in my breast, 120
 My longing, my sadness, my joy?
 Will ye claim for your great ones the gift
 To have render'd the gleam of my skies,
 To have echoed the moan of my seas,
 Utter'd the voice of my hills? 125
 When your great ones depart, will ye say—
 'All things have suffer'd a loss—
 Nature is hid in their grave?'

"Race after race, man after man,
 Have dream'd that my secret was theirs, 130
 Have thought that I liv'd but for them,
 That they were my glory and joy.—
 They are dust, they are chang'd, they are gone.
 I remain."

MORALITY

WE cannot kindle when we will
 The fire that in the heart resides,
 The spirit bloweth and is still,
 In mystery our soul abides :
 But tasks in hours of insight will'd 5
 Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone ;
 We bear the burden and the heat
 Of the long day, and wish 'twere done. 10
 Not till the hours of light return
 All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
 When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
 Ask, how *she* view'd thy self-control, 15
 Thy struggling task'd morality.

Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
 Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
 Whose eyes thou wert afraid to seek, 20
 See, on her face a glow is spread,
 A strong emotion on her cheek.

"Ah child," she cries, "that strife divine—
 Whence was it, for it is not mine?"

"There is no effort on *my* brow— 25
 I do not strive, I do not weep.
 I rush with the swift spheres, and glow
 In joy, and, when I will, I sleep.—

Yet that severe, that earnest air,
 I saw, I felt it once—but where? 30

"I knew not yet the gauge of Time,
 Nor wore the manacles of Space.
 I felt it in some other clime—
 I saw it in some other place.

—'Twas when the heavenly house I trod, 35
 And lay upon the breast of God."

PROGRESS

THE Master stood upon the mount, and taught.
 He saw a fire in his disciples' eyes;
 "The old law," they said, "is wholly come to naught!
 Behold the new world rise!"

"Was it," the Lord then said, "with scorn ye saw 5
 The old law observed by Scribes and Pharisees?"

I say unto you, see *ye* keep that law
More faithfully than these !

“ Too hasty heads for ordering worlds, alas !
Think not that I to annul the law have will'd ; 10
No jot, no tittle from the law shall pass,
Till all hath been fulfill'd.”

So Christ said eighteen hundred years ago.
And what then shall be said to those to-day
Who cry aloud to lay the old world low 15
To clear the new world's way ?

“ Religious fervours ! ardour misapplied !
Hence, hence,” they cry, “ ye do but keep man blind !
But keep him self-immersed, preoccupied,
And lame the active mind.” 20

Ah ! from the old world let someone answer give :
“ Scorn ye this world, their tears, their inward cares ?
I say unto you, see that *your* souls live
A deeper life than theirs.

“ Say ye : The spirit of man has found new roads ; 25
And we must leave the old faiths, and walk therein ?—
Leave then the Cross as ye have left carved gods,
But guard the fire within !

“ Bright, else, and fast the stream of life may roll,
And no man may the other's hurt behold ; 30
Yet each will have one anguish—his own soul
Which perishes of cold.”

Here let that voice make end ! then let a strain
From a far lonelier distance, like the wind
Be heard, floating through heaven, and fill again 35
These men's profoundest mind :

“ Children of men ! the unseen Power, whose eye
 For ever doth accompany mankind,
 Hath look'd on no religion scornfully
 That man did ever find. 40

“ Which has not taught weak wills how much they can,
 Which has not fall'n on the dry heart like rain,
 Which has not cried to sunk, self-weary man :
Thou must be born again !

“ Children of men ! not that your age excel 45
 In pride of life the ages of your sires,
 But that *you* think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well,
 The Friend of man desires.”

THE FUTURE

A WANDERER is man from his birth.
 He was born in a ship.
 On the breast of the River of Time.
 Brimming with wonder and joy
 He spreads out his arms to the light, 5
 Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
 Whether he wakes
 Where the snowy mountainous pass,
 Echoing the screams of the eagles, 10
 Hems in its gorges the bed
 Of the new-born clear-flowing stream :

Whether he first sees light
 Where the river in gleaming rings
 Sluggishly winds through the plain : 15
 Whether in sound of the swallowing sea :—

As is the world on the banks
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each as he glides
Fable and dream 20
Of the lands which the River of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been clos'd.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of : only the thoughts, 25
Rais'd by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green Earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time ?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough ? 30
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then roam'd on her breast,
Her vigorous primitive sons ?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear 35
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well ?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure ? 40

What Bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt, 45
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste ?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him ?

This tract which the River of Time 50
Now flows through with us, is the Plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Border'd by cities and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream,
And we on its breast, our minds 55
Are confus'd as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the River of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge 60
In a blacker incessanter line ;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead. 65

That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed. 70

Haply, the River of Time,
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider statelier stream—
May acquire, if not the calm 75
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with foam 80
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast :

As the pale waste widens around him—
As the banks fade dimmer away—
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite Sea

85

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AN EPISODE

AND the first grey of morning fill'd the east,
And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream
But all the Tartar camp along the stream
Was hush'd, and still the men were plunged in sleep :
Sohrab alone, he slept not : all night long
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed ;
But when the grey dawn stole into his tent,
He rose and clad himself, and girt his sword,
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's tent.
Through the black Tartar tents he pass'd, which stood
Clustering like bee-hives on the low flat strand
Of Oxus, where the summer floods o'erflow
When the sun melts the snows in high Pamere :
Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er that low strand
And to a hillock came, a little back
From the stream's brink, the spot where first a boat,
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
The men of former times had crown'd the top
With a clay fort : but that was fall'n ; and now
The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were spread.
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood
Upon the thick-pil'd carpets in the tent,

5

10

15

20

25

And found the old man sleeping on his bed
Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his arms.
And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the step
Was dull'd ; for he slept light, an old man's sleep ;
And he rose quickly on one arm, and said :— 30

“ Who art thou ? for it is not yet clear dawn.
Speak ! is there news, or any night alarm ? ”

But Sohrab came to the bedside, and said :—

“ Thou knowest me, Peran-Wisa : it is I.
The sun is not yet risen, and the foe 35

Sleep ; but I sleep not ; all night long I lie

Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.

For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek

Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son,
In Samarcand, before the army march'd ; 40

And I will tell thee what my heart desires.

Thou knowest if, since from Ader-baijan first

I came among the Tartars, and bore arms,

I have still serv'd Afrasiab well, and shown,

At my boy's years, the courage of a man. 45

This too thou know'st, that, while I still bear on

The conquering Tartar ensigns through the world,

And beat the Persians back on every field,

I seek one man, one man, and one alone—

Rustum, my father ; who, I hop'd, should greet, 50

Should one day greet, upon some well-fought field

His not unworthy, not inglorious son.

So I long hop'd, but him I never find.

Come then, hear now and grant me what I ask.

Let the two armies rest to-day : but I 55

Will challenge forth the bravest Persian lords

To meet me, man to man : if I prevail,

Rustum will surely hear it ; if I fall—

Old man, the dead need no one, claim no kin.

Dim is the rumour of a common fight, 60

Where host meets host, and many names are sunk :

But of a single combat fame speaks clear.”

He spoke : and Peran-Wisa took the hand

Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and said :

“ O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is thine ! 65

Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,
And share the battle's common chance with us

Who love thee, but must press for ever first,
In single fight incurring single risk,

To find a father thou hast never seen ? 70

That were far best, my son, to stay with us

Unmurmuring ; in our tents, while it is war,

And when 'tis truce, then in Afrasiab's towns.

But, if this one desire indeed rules all,

To seek out Rustum—seek him not through fight : 75

Seek him in peace, and carry to his arms,

O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son !

But far hence seek him, for he is not here.

For now it is not as when I was young,

When Rustum was in front of every fray : 80

But now he keeps apart, and sits at home,

In Seistan, with Zal, his father old.

Whether that his own mighty strength at last

Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age ;

Or in some quarrel with the Persian King. 85

There go :—Thou wilt not ? Yet my heart forebodes

Danger or death awaits thee on this field.

Fain would I know thee safe and well, though lost

To us : fain therefore send thee hence, in peace

To seek thy father, not seek single fights 90

In vain :—but who can keep the lion's cub

From ravening ? and who govern Rustum's son ?

Go : I will grant thee what thy heart desires.”

So said he, and dropp'd Sohrab's hand, and left

His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he lay, 95

And o'er his chilly limbs his woollen coat

He pass'd, and tied his sandals on his feet,

And threw a white cloak round him, and he took

In his right hand a ruler's staff, no sword ;

And on his head he placed his sheep-skin cap, 100

Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-Kul ;

And rais'd the curtain of his tent, and call'd
His herald to his side, and went abroad.

The sun, by this, had risen, and clear'd the fog
From the broad Oxus and the glittering sands : 105
And from their tents the Tartar horsemen fil'd
Into the open plain ; so Haman bade ;
Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa rul'd
The host, and still was in his lusty prime.
From their black tents, long files of horse, they
stream'd : 110

As when, some grey November morn, the files,
In marching order spread, of long-neck'd cranes
Stream over Casbin, and the southern slopes
Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
Or some froze Caspian reed-bed, southward bound 115
For the warm Persian sea-board : so they stream'd.
The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
First with black sheep-skin caps and with long spears ;
Large men, large steeds ; who from Bokhara come
And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares. 120
Next the more temperate Toorkmuns of the south,
The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands ;
Light men, and on light steeds, who only drink
The acrid milk of camels, and their wells. 125
And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came
From far, and a more doubtful service own'd ;
The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks
Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
And close-set skull-caps ; and those wilder hordes 130
Who roam o'er Kipchak and the northern waste,
Kalmuks and unkemp'd Kuzzaks, tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere.
These all fil'd out from camp into the plain. 135
And on the other side the Persians form'd :
First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they seem'd,
The Ilyats of Khorassan : and behind,

The royal troops of Persia, horse and foot,
Marshall'd battalions bright in burnish'd steel. 140
But Peran-Wisa with his herald came

Threading the Tartar squadrons to the front,
And with his staff kept back the foremost ranks.
And when Ferood, who led the Persians, saw
That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back, 145
He took his spear, and to the front he came,
And check'd his ranks, and fix'd them where they stood.

And the old Tartar came upon the sand
Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and said :—

“ Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars, hear ! 150
Let there be truce between the hosts to-day.
But choose a champion from the Persian lords
To fight our champion Sohrab, man to man.”

As, in the country, on a morn in June,
When the dew glistens on the pearled ears, 155
A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy—
So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa said,
A thrill through all the Tartar squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they lov'd.

But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool, 160
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
That vast sky-neighbouring mountain of milk snow ;
Winding so high, that, as they mount, they pass
Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
Chok'd by the air, and scarce can they themselves 165
Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulberries—
In single file they move, and stop their breath,
For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging snows—
So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.

And to Ferood his brother Chiefs came up 170
To counsel : Gudurz and Zoarrah came,
And Feraburz, who rul'd the Persian host
Second, and was the uncle of the King :

These came and counsell'd ; and then Gudurz said :
“ Ferood, shame bids us take their challenge up, 175
Yet champion have we none to match this youth.

He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart.
 But Rustum came last night ; aloof he sits
 And sullen, and has pitch'd his tents apart :
 Him will I seek, and carry to his ear 180
 The Tartar challenge, and this young man's name.
 Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight.
 Stand forth the while, and take their challenge up."

So spake he ; and Ferood stood forth and said :
 " Old man, be it agreed as thou hast said— 185
 Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a man."

He spoke ; and Peran-Wisa turn'd, and strode
 Back through the opening squadrons to his tent.
 But through the anxious Persians Gudurz ran,
 And cross'd the camp which lay behind, and reach'd, 190
 Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's tents.
 Of scarlet cloth they were, and glittering gay,
 Just pitch'd : the high pavilion in the midst
 Was Rustum's, and his men lay camp'd around.
 And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and found 195
 Rustum : his morning meal was done, but still
 The table stood beside him, charg'd with food ;
 A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of bread,
 And dark green melons ; and there Rustum sate
 Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist, 200
 And play'd with it ; but Gudurz came and stood
 Before him ; and he look'd, and saw him stand ;
 And with a cry sprang up, and dropp'd the bird,
 And greeted Gudurz with both hands, and said :—

" Welcome ! these eyes could see no better sight. 205
 What news ? but sit down first, and eat and drink."

But Gudurz stood in the tent door, and said :—
 " Not now : a time will come to eat and drink,
 But not to-day : to-day has other needs.
 The armies are drawn out, and stand at gaze : 210
 For from the Tartars is a challenge brought
 To pick a champion from the Persian lords
 To fight their champion—and thou know'st his name—
 Sohrab men call him, but his birth is hid.

O Rustum, like thy might is this young man's ! 215
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart.
And he is young, and Iran's Chiefs are old,
Or else too weak ; and all eyes turn to thee.
Come down and help us, Rustum, or we lose."

He spoke : but Rustum answer'd with a smile :— 220
" Go to ! if Iran's Chiefs are old, then I
Am older : if the young are weak, the King
Errs strangely : for the King, for Kai Khosroo,
Himself is young, and honours younger men,
And lets the aged moulder to their graves. 225
Rustum he loves no more, but loves the young—
The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts, not I.
For what care I, though all speak Sohrab's fame ?
For would that I myself had such a son,
And not that one slight helpless girl I have, 230
A son so fam'd, so brave, to send to war,
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,
My father, whom the robber Afghans vex,
And clip his borders short, and drive his herds,
And he has none to guard his weak old age. 235
There would I go, and hang my armour up,
And with my great name fence that weak old man,
And spend the goodly treasures I have got,
And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's fame,
And leave to death the hosts of thankless kings, 240
And with these slaughterous hands draw sword no
more."

He spoke, and smil'd ; and Gudurz made reply :—
" What then, O Rustum, will men say to this,
When Sohrab dares our bravest forth, and seeks
Thee most of all, and thou, whom most he seeks, 245
Hidest thy face ? Take heed, lest men should say,
Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his fame,
And shuns to peril it with younger men."

And, greatly mov'd, then Rustum made reply :—
" O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say such words ? 250
Thou knowest better words than this to say.

What is one more, one less, obscure or fam'd,
 Valiant or craven, young or old, to me ?
 Are not they mortal, am not I myself ?
 But who for men of nought would do great deeds ? 255
 Come, thou shalt see how Rustum hoards his fame.
 But I will fight unknown, and in plain arms ;
 Let not men say of Rustum, he was match'd
 In single fight with any mortal man."

He spoke, and frown'd ; and Gudurz turn'd, and
 ran 260

Back quickly through the camp in fear and joy,
 Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum came.
 But Rustum strode to his tent door, and call'd
 His followers in, and bade them bring his arms,
 And clad himself in steel : the arms he chose 265
 Were plain, and on his shield was no device,
 Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,
 And from the fluted spine atop a plume
 Of horsehair wav'd, a scarlet horsehair plume.
 So arm'd he issued forth ; and Ruksh, his horse, 270
 Follow'd him, like a faithful hound, at heel,
 Ruksh, whose renown was nois'd through all the earth,
 The horse, whom Rustum on a foray once
 Did in Bokhara by the river find
 A colt beneath its dam, and drove him home, 275
 And rear'd him ; a bright bay, with lofty crest ;
 Dight with a saddle-cloth of broider'd green
 Crusted with gold, and on the ground were work'd
 All beasts of chase, all beasts which hunters know :
 So follow'd, Rustum left his tent, and cross'd 280
 The camp, and to the Persian host appear'd.
 And all the Persians knew him, and with shouts
 Hail'd ; but the Tartars knew who he was.
 And dear as the wet diver to the eyes
 Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on shore, 285
 By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,
 Plunging all day in the blue waves, at night,
 Having made up his tale of precious pearls,

Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands—
So dear to the pale Persians Rustum came.

290

And Rustum to the Persian front advanc'd,
And Sohrab arm'd in Haman's tent, and came.
And as afield the reapers cut a swathe
Down through the middle of a rich man's corn,
And on each side are squares of standing corn,
And in the midst a stubble, short and bare ;
So on each side were squares of men, with spears
Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.
And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast
His eyes towards the Tartar tents, and saw
Sohrab come forth, and ey'd him as he came.

295

300

As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,
Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge
Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes her fire—
At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,
When the frost flowers the whiten'd window panes—
And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts
Of that poor drudge may be ; so Rustum ey'd
The unknown adventurous Youth, who from afar
Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
All the most valiant chiefs : long he perus'd
His spirited air, and wonder'd who he was.
For very young he seem'd, tenderly rear'd ;
Like some young cypress, tall and dark, and straight,
Which in a queen's secluded garden throws
Its slight dark shadow on the moonlit turf,
By midnight, to a bubbling fountain's sound—
So slender Sohrab seem'd, so softly rear'd.

305

310

315

And a deep pity enter'd Rustum's soul
As he behold him coming ; and he stood,
And beckon'd to him with his hand, and said :—

320

“ O thou young man, the air of Heaven is soft,
And warm, and pleasant ; but the grave is cold.
Heaven's air is better than the cold dead grave.
Behold me : I am vast, and clad in iron,
And tried ; and I have stood on many a field

325

Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe :
 Never was that field lost, or that foe sav'd.
 O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death ?
 Be govern'd : quit the Tartar host, and come 330
 To Iran, and be as my son to me,
 And fight beneath my banner till I die.
 There are no youths in Iran brave as thou."

So he spake, mildly : Sohrab heard his voice,
 The mighty voice of Rustum ; and he saw 335
 His giant figure planted on the sand,
 Sole, like some single tower, which a chief
 Has builded on the waste in former years
 Against the robbers ; and he saw that head,
 Streak'd with its first grey hairs : hope fill'd his 340
 soul ;

And he ran forwards and embrac'd his knees,
 And clasp'd his hand within his own and said :—
 " Oh, by thy father's head ! by thine own soul !
 Art thou not Rustum ? Speak ! art thou not he ? "

But Rustum ey'd askance the kneeling youth, 345
 And turn'd away, and spoke to his own soul :—

" Ah me, I muse what this young fox may mean.
 False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.
 For if I now confess this thing he asks,
 And hide it not, but say—*Rustum is here*— 350
 He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,
 But he will find some pretext not to fight,
 And praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts,
 A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
 And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall, 355
 In Samarcand, he will arise and cry—

" I challeng'd once, when the two armies camp'd
 Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords
 To cope with me in single fight ; but they
 Shrank ; only Rustum dar'd : then he and I 360
 Chang'd gifts, and went on equal terms away."
 So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud.
 Then were the chiefs of Iran sham'd through me."

And then he turn'd, and sternly spake aloud :—
“ Rise ! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus 365
Of Rustum ? I am here, whom thou hast call'd
By challenge forth : make good thy vaunt, or yield.
Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst fight ?
Rash boy, men look on Rustum's face and flee ?
For well I know, that did great Rustum stand 370
Before thy face this day, and were reveal'd,
There would be then no talk of fighting more.
But being what I am, I tell thee this ;
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul :
Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt, and yield ; 375
Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds
Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer floods,
Oxus in summer wash them all away.”

He spoke : and Sohrab answer'd, on his feet :—
“ Art thou so fierce ? Thou wilt not fright me so. 380
I am no girl, to be made pale by words.
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand
Here on this field, there were no fighting then.
But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here.
Begin : thou art more vast, more dread than I, 385
And thou art prov'd, I know, and I am young—
But yet Success sways with the breath of Heaven.
And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure
Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely know.
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea, 390
Pois'd on the top of a huge wave of Fate,
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.
And whether it will heave us up to land,
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,
Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death, 395
We know not, and no search will make us know :
Only the event will teach us in its hour.”

He spoke ; and Rustum answer'd not, but hurl'd
His spear : down from the shoulder, down it came,
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk 400
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds

Drops like a plummet : Sohrab saw it come,
 And sprang aside, quick as a flash : the spear
 Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the sand,
 Which it sent flying wide :—then Sohrab threw 405
 In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield : sharp rang,
 The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd the spear.
 And Rustum seiz'd his club, which none but he
 Could wield : an unlopp'd trunk it was, and huge,
 Still rough ; like those which men in treeless plains 410
 To build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,
 Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up
 By their dark springs, the wind in winter-time
 Has made in Himalayan forests wrack,
 And strewn the channels with torn boughs ; so huge 415
 The club which Rustum lifted now, and struck
 One stroke ; but again Sohrab sprang aside
 Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came
 Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.
 And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell 420
 To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sands :
 And now might Sohrab have unsheath'd his sword,
 And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
 Dizzy, and on his knees, and chok'd with sand :
 But he look'd on, and smil'd, nor bar'd his sword, 425
 But courteously drew back, and spoke, and said :—
 “ Thou strik'st too hard : that club of thine will float
 Upon the summer floods, and not my bones.
 But rise, and be not wroth ; not wroth am I :
 No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul. 430
 Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum : be it so.
 Who art thou then, that canst so touch my soul ?
 Boy as I am, I have seen battles too ;
 Have waded foremost in their bloody waves,
 And heard their hollow roar of dying men ; 435
 But never was my heart thus touch'd before.
 Are they from Heaven, these softenings of the heart ?
 O thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven !
 Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,

And make a truce, and sit upon this sand, 440
And pledge each other in red wine, like friends,
And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds.
There are enough foes in the Persian host
Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel no pang ;
Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom thou 445
Mayst fight ; fight them, when they confront thy spear.
But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and me ! ”

He ceas'd : but while he spake, Rustum had risen,
And stood erect, trembling with rage : his club
He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear, 450
Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right-hand
Blaz'd bright and baleful, like that autumn Star,
The baleful sign of fevers : dust had soil'd
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.
His breast heav'd ; his lips foam'd ; and twice his
voice 455

Was chok'd with rage : at last these words broke way :—

“ Girl ! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands !
Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words !
Fight ; let me hear thy hateful voice no more !
Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now 460
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art wont to dance ;
But on the Oxus sands, and in the dance
Of battle, and with me, who make no play
Of war : I fight it out, and hand to hand.
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge, and wine ! 465
Remember all thy valour : try thy feints
And cunning : all the pity I had is gone :
Because thou hast sham'd me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl's wiles.”

He spoke ; and Sohrab kindled at his taunts, 470
And he too drew his sword : at once they rush'd
Together, as two eagles on one prey
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west : their shields
Dash'd with a clang together, and a din 475
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters

Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing trees : such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.
And you would say that sun and stars took part 480
In that unnatural conflict ; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark'd the sun
Over the fighters' heads ; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the pair. 485
In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and they alone ;
For both the on-looking hosts on either hand
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with bloodshot eyes 490
And labouring breath ; first Rustum struck the shield
Which Sohrab held stiff out : the steel-spik'd spear
Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach the skin,
And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm, 495
Nor clove its steel quite through ; but all the crest
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume,
Never till now defil'd, sank to the dust ;
And Rustum bow'd his head ; but then the gloom
Grew blacker : thunder rumbled in the air, 500
And lightnings rent the cloud ; and Ruksh, the horse,
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful cry :
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pain'd desert lion, who all day
Has trail'd the hunter's javelin in his side, 505
And comes at night to die upon the sand :—
The two hosts heard that cry, and quak'd for fear,
And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.
But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but rush'd on,
And struck again ; and again Rustum bow'd 510
His head ; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
And in his hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum rais'd his head : his dreadful eyes

Glar'd, and he shook on high his menacing spear, 515
And shouted, *Rustum!* Sohrab heard that shout,
And shrank amaz'd : back he recoil'd one step,
And scann'd with blinking eyes the advancing Form :
And then he stood bewilder'd ; and he dropp'd
His covering shield, and the spear pierc'd his side. 520
He reel'd, and staggering back, sunk to the ground.
And then the gloom dispers'd, and the wind fell,
And the bright sun broke forth, and melted all
The cloud ; and the two armies saw the pair ;
Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet, 525
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.

Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began :—
“ Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,
And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent. 530
Or else that the great Rustum would come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.
And then that all the Tartar host would praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame, 535
To glad thy father in his weak old age.
Fool ! thou art slain, and by an unknown man !
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be,
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old.”

And with a fearless mien Sohrab replied :— 540
“ Unknown thou art ; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain.
Thou dost not slay me, proud and boastful man !
No ! Rustum slays me, and this filial heart.
For were I match'd with ten such men as thou,
And I were he who till to-day I was, 545
They should be lying here, I standing there.
But that beloved name unnerv'd my arm—
That name, and something, I confess, in thee,
Which troubles all my heart, and made my shield
Fall ; and thy spear transfix'd an unarm'd foe. 550
And now thou boastest, and insult'st my fate.
But hear thou this, fierce Man, tremble to hear !

The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death !
 My father, whom I seek through all the world,
 He shall avenge my death, and punish thee ! " 555

As when some hunter in the spring hath found
 A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,
 Upon the craggy isle of a hill lake,
 And pierc'd her with an arrow as she rose,
 And follow'd her to find her where she fell 560
 Far off ;—anon her mate comes winging back
 From hunting, and a great way off descries
 His huddling young left sole ; at that, he checks
 His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps 565
 Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
 Chiding his mate back to her nest ; but she
 Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,
 In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
 A heap of fluttering feathers : never more
 Shall the lake glass her, flying over it ; 570
 Never the black and dripping precipices
 Echo her stormy scream as she sails by :—
 As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss—
 So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood
 Over his dying son, and knew him not. 575

But with a cold, incredulous voice, he said :—
 " What prate is this of fathers and revenge ?
 The mighty Rustum never had a son."

And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied :—
 " Ah yes, he had ! and that lost son am I. 580
 Surely the news will one day reach his ear,
 Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long,
 Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here ;
 And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap
 To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee. 585
 Fierce Man, bethink thee, for an only son !
 What will that grief, what will that vengeance be !
 Oh, could I live, till I that grief had seen !
 Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
 My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells 590

With that old King, her father, who grows grey
With age, and rules over the valiant Koords.
Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honour, when the war is done. 595
But a dark rumour will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her ear ;
And then will that defenceless woman learn
That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no more ;
But that in battle with a nameless foe, 600
By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."

He spoke ; and as he ceas'd he wept aloud,
Thinking of her he left, and his own death.
He spoke ; but Rustum listen'd, plung'd in thought.
Nor did he yet believe it was his son 605
Who spoke, although he call'd back names he knew ;
For he had had sure tidings, that the babe,
Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,
Had been a puny girl, no boy at all :
So that sad mother sent him word, for fear 610
Rustum should take the boy, to train in arms ;
And so he deem'd that either Sohrab took,
By a false boast, the style of Rustum's son ;
Or that men gave it him, to swell his fame.
So deem'd he ; yet he listen'd, plung'd in thought ; 615
And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide
Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to shore
At the full moon : tears gathered in his eyes ;
For he remembered his own early youth,
And all its bounding rapture ; as, at dawn, 620
The Shepherd from his mountain lodge descries
A far bright City, smitten by the sun,
Through many rolling clouds ;—so Rustum saw
His youth ; saw Sohrab's mother, in her bloom ;
And that old King, her father, who lov'd well 625
His wandering guest, and gave him his fair child
With joy ; and all the pleasant life they led,
They three, in that long-distant summer-time—

The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt
 And hound, and morn on those delightful hills 630
 In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,
 Of age and looks to be his own dear son,
 Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
 Like some rich hyacinth, which by the scythe
 Of an unskilful gardner has been cut, 635
 Mowing the garden grass-plots near its bed,
 And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,
 On the mown dying grass ;—so Sohrab lay,
 Lovely in death, upon the common sand.

And Rustum gaz'd on him with grief, and said :— 640

“ O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
 Whom Rustum wert thou his, might well have lov'd !
 Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
 Have told thee false ;—thou art not Rustum's son.
 For Rustum had no son : one child he had— 645
 But one—a girl : who with her mother now
 Plies some light female task, nor dreams of us—
 Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor war.”

But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath ; for now
 The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew fierce, 650
 And he desired to draw forth the steel,
 And let the blood flow free, and so to die ;
 But first he would convince his stubborn foe—
 And, rising sternly on one arm, he said :—

“ Man, who art thou who dost deny my words ? 655
 Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
 And Falsehood, while I liv'd, was far from mine.
 I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear
 That seal which Rustum to my mother gave.
 That she might prick it on the babe she bore.” 660

He spoke : and all the blood left Rustum's cheeks ;
 And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand
 Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand
 That the hard iron corslet clank'd aloud :
 And to his heart he press'd the other hand, 665
 And in a hollow voice he spake, and said :—

“Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie.
If thou shew this, then art thou Rustum's son.”

Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loos'd
His belt, and near the shoulder bar'd his arm, 670
And shew'd a sign in faint vermilion points
Prick'd : as a cunning workman, in Pekin,
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,
An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp 675
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands :—
So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd

On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
It was that Griffin, which of old rear'd Zal,
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die, 680
A helpless babe, among the mountain rocks.

Him that kind Creature found, and rear'd, and lov'd—
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.

And Sohrab bar'd that figure on his arm,
And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes, 685
And then he touch'd it with his hand and said :—

“How say'st thou ? Is that sign the proper sign
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's ? ”

He spoke : but Rustum gaz'd, and gaz'd, and stood
Speechless ; and then he utter'd one sharp cry— 690
O Boy—thy Father !—and his voice choked there.

And then a dark cloud pass'd before his eyes,
And his head swam, and he sunk down to earth
But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast
His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips, 695

And with fond faltering fingers strok'd his cheeks,
Trying to call him back to life : and life
Came back to Rustum, and he op'd his eyes
And they stood wide with horror ; and he seiz'd
In both his hands the dust which lay around, 700

And threw it on his head, and smirch'd his hair,
His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms :
And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,
And his sobs chok'd him ; and he clutch'd his sword,

To draw it, and for ever let life out. 705
But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
And with a soothing voice he spoke, and said :—
“ Father, forbear : for I but meet to-day
The doom that at my birth was written down
In Heaven, and thou art Heaven’s unconscious hand. 710
Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
When first I saw thee ; and thy heart spoke too,
I know it : but Fate trod those promptings down
Under its iron heel ; Fate, Fate engag’d
The strife and hurl’d me on my father’s spear. 715
But let us speak no more of this : I find
My father ; let me feel that I have found.
Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take
My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
And wash them with thy tears, and say, *My Son !* 720
Quick ! quick ! for number’d are my sands of life,
And swift ; for like the lightning to this field
I came, and like the wind I go away—
Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind.
But it was writ in Heaven that this should be.” 725
So said he : and his voice releas’d the heart
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth ; he cast
His arms round his son’s neck, and wept aloud,
And kiss’d him. And awe fell on both the hosts
When they saw Rustum’s grief : and Ruksh, the 730
horse,
With his head bowing to the ground, and mane
Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe
First to the one then to the other mov’d
His head, as if enquiring what their grief 734
Might mean ; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears roll’d down, and cak’d the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said :—
“ Ruksh, now thou grievest ; but, O Ruksh, thy feet
Should then have rotted on their nimble joints,
When first they bore thy Master to this field.” 740
But Sohrab look’d upon the horse and said :—

“ Is this then Ruksh ? How often, in past days,
My mother told me of thee, thou brave Steed !
My terrible father's terrible horse ; and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee. 745
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane.
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I ;
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's home.
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan, 750
And seen the River of Helmund, and the Lake
Of Zirrah ; and the aged Zal himself
Has often strok'd thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soak'd with wine,
And said—‘ O Ruksh ! bear Rustum well ! ’—but I 755
Have never known my grandsire's furrow'd face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slak'd my thirst at the clear Helmund
stream :

But lodg'd among my father's foes, and seen
Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand, 760
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,
And the black Toorkmun tents ; and only drunk
The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,
The northern Sir ; and this great Oxus stream— 765
The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die.”

And, with a heavy groan, Rustum replied :—
“ Oh that its waves were flowing over me !
Oh that I saw its grains of yellow silt
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head ! ” 770

And, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab replied :—
“ Desire not that, my father ; thou must live.
For some are born to do great deeds, and live,
As some are born to be obscur'd, and die.
Do thou the deeds I die too young to do, 775
And reap a second glory in thine age.
Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
But come: thou seest this great host of men

Which follow me ; I pray thee, slay not these :
 Let me entreat for them : what have they done ? 780
 They follow'd me, my hope, my fame, my star.
 Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.
 But me thou must bear hence, not send with them,
 But carry me with thee to Seistan,
 And place me on a bed, and mourn for me, 785
 Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all thy friends.
 And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,
 And heap a stately mound above my bones,
 And plant a far-seen pillar over all :
 That so the passing horseman on the waste 790
 May see my tomb a great way off, and say—
Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill—
 And I be not forgotten in my grave."

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:— 795
 " Fear not ; as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,
 So shall it be : for I will burn my tents,
 And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
 And carry thee away to Seistan,
 And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee, 800
 With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
 And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
 And heap a stately mound about thy bones,
 And plant a far-seen pillar over all :
 And men shall not forget thee in thy grave. 805
 And I will spare thy host : yea, let them go :
 Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.
 What should I do with slaying any more ?
 For would that all whom I have ever slain
 Might be once more alive ; my bitterest foes, 810
 And they who were call'd champions in their time,
 And through whose death I won that fame I have ;
 And I were nothing but a common man,
 A poor, mean soldier, and without renown ;
 So thou mightest live too, my Son, my Son ! 815
 Or rather would that I, even I myself,

Might now be lying on this bloody sand,
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,
Not thou of mine ; and I might die, not thou ;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan ; 820
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine ;
And say—*O son, I weep thee not too sore,
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end.*—
But now in blood and battles was my youth,
And full of blood and battles is my age ; 825
And I shall never end this life of blood.”

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied :—
“ A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful Man !
But thou shalt yet have peace ; only not now ;
Not yet : but thou shalt have it on that day, 830
When thou shalt sail in a high-masted Ship,
Thou and the other peers of Kai-Khosroo,
Returning home over the salt blue sea,
From laying thy dear Master in his grave.”

And Rustum gaz'd on Sohrab's face, and said :— 835
“ Soon be that day, my Son, and deep that sea !
Till then, if Fate so wills, let me endure.”

He spoke ; and Sohrab smil'd on him, and took
The spear, and drew it from his side, and eas'd
His wound's imperious anguish : but the blood 840
Came welling from the open gash, and life
Flow'd with the stream : all down his cold white side
The crimson torrent ran, dim now, and soil'd,
Like the soil'd tissue of white violets
Left, freshly gather'd, on their native bank, 845
By romping children, whom their nurses call
From the hot fields at noon : his head droop'd low,
His limbs grew slack ; motionless, white, he lay—
White, with eyes clos'd ; only when heavy gasps,
Deep, heavy gasps, quivering through all his frame, 850
Convuls'd him back to life, he open'd them,
And fix'd them feebly on his father's face :
Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs
Unwillingly the spirit fled away,

Regretting the warm mansion which it left, 855
And youth and bloom, and this delightful world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead.
And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
As those black granite pillars, once high-rear'd 860
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
His house, now, mid their broken flights of steps,
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side—
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.

And night came down over the solemn waste, 865
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darken'd all ; and a cold fog, with night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loos'd, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog : for now 870
Both armies mov'd to camp, and took their meal :
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward ; the Tartars by the river marge :
And Rustum and his son were left alone.

But the majestic River floated on, 875
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there mov'd,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasmian waste,
Under the solitary moon ; he flow'd
Right for the Polar Star, past Orgunjè, 880
Brimming, and bright, and large : then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents ; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles— 885
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer :—till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters open, bright 890
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bath'd stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

PHILOMELA

HARK ! ah, the Nightingale !
 The tawny-throated !
 Hark ! from that moonlit cedar what a burst !
 What triumph ! hark—what pain !

O Wanderer from a Grecian shore, 5
 Still, after many years, in distant lands,
 Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
 That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world
 pain—
 Say, will it never heal ?
 And can this fragrant lawn 10
 With its cool trees, and night,
 And the sweet tranquil Thames,
 And moonshine, and the dew,
 To thy rack'd heart and brain
 Afford no balm ? 15
 Dost thou to-night behold
 Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
 The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild ?
 Dost thou again peruse
 With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes 20
 The too clear web, and thy dumb Sister's shame ?
 Dost thou once more assay
 Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
 Poor Fugitive, the feathery change
 Once more, and once more seem to make resound 25
 With love and hate, triumph and agony,
 Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale ?
 Listen, Eugenia—
 How thick the bursts come crowding through the
 leaves !
 Again—thou hearest ! 30
 Eternal Passion !
 Eternal Pain !

THE CHURCH OF BROU

III

THE TOMB

So rest, for ever rest, O Princely Pair !
 In your high Church, 'mid the still mountain air,
 Where horn, and hound, and vassals, never come.
 Only the blessed Saints are smiling dumb
 From the rich painted windows of the nave 5
 On aisle, and transept, and your marble grave :
 Where thou, young Prince, shalt never more arise
 From the fring'd mattress where thy Duchess lies,
 On autumn mornings, when the bugle sounds,
 And ride across the drawbridge with thy hounds 10
 To hunt the boar in the crisp woods till eve.
 And thou, O Princess, shalt no more receive,
 Thou and thy ladies, in the hall of state,
 The jaded hunters with their bloody freight,
 Coming benighted to the castle gate. 15

So sleep, for ever sleep, O Marble Pair !
 Or, if ye wake, let it be then, when fair
 On the carv'd Western Front a flood of light
 Streams from the setting sun, and colours bright
 Prophets, transfigur'd Saints, and Martyrs brave, 20
 In the vast western window of the nave ;
 And on the pavement round the Tomb there glints
 A chequer-work of glowing sapphire tints,
 And amethyst, and ruby ;—then uncloset
 Your eyelids on the stone where ye repose, 25
 And from your broider'd pillows lift your heads,
 And rise upon your cold white marble beds,
 And looking down on the warm rosy tints
 That chequer, at your feet, the illumin'd flints,
 Say—“ *What is this ? we are in bliss—forgiven—* 30
Behold the pavement of the courts of Heaven !”—
 Or let it be on autumn nights, when rain

Doth rustlingly above your heads complain
 On the smooth leaden roof, and on the walls
 Shedding her pensive light at intervals
 The Moon through the clere-story windows shines, 35
 And the wind wails among the mountain pines.
 Then, gazing up through the dim pillars high,
 The foliag'd marble forest where ye lie,
 "Hush"—ye will say—"it is eternity. 40
This is the glimmering verge of Heaven, and these
The columns of the Heavenly Palaces."—
 And in the sweeping of the wind your ear
 The passage of the Angels' wings will hear,
 And on the lichen-cruled leads above 45
 The rustle of the eternal rain of Love.

THE NECKAN

IN summer, on the headlands,
 The Baltic Sea along,
 Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
 And sings his plaintive song.

Green rolls beneath the headlands, 5
 Green rolls the Baltic Sea,
 And there, below the Neckan's feet,
 His wife and children be.

He sings not of the ocean,
 Its shells and roses pale. 10
 Of earth, of earth the Neckan sings;
 He hath no other tale.

He sits upon the headlands,
 And sings a mournful stave
 Of all he saw and felt on earth, 15
 Far from the green sea wave.

Sings how, a knight, he wander'd
By castle, field, and town.—
But earthly knights have harder hearts
Than the Sea Children own. 20

Sings of his earthly bridal—
Priest, knights, and ladies gay.
“And who art thou,” the priest began,
“Sir Knight, who wedd'st to-day?”—

“I am no knight,” he answered ; 25
“From the sea waves I come.”—
The knights drew sword, the ladies scream'd,
The surplic'd priest stood dumb.

He sings how from the chapel
He vanish'd with his bride, 30
And bore her down to the sea halls,
Beneath the salt sea tide.

He sings how she sits weeping
'Mid shells that round her lie.
“False Neckan shares my bed,” she weeps ; 35
“No Christian mate have I.”—

He sings how through the billows
He rose to earth again,
And sought a priest to sign the cross,
That Neckan Heaven might gain. 40

He sings how, on an evening,
Beneath the birch trees cool,
He sate and play'd his harp of gold,
Beside the river pool.

Beside the pool sate Neckan— 45
Tears fill'd his cold blue eye.

On his white mule, across the bridge,
A cassock'd priest rode by.

“Why sitt'st thou there, O Neckan,
And play'st thy harp of gold? 50
Sooner shall this my staff bear leaves,
Than thou shalt Heaven behold.”—

The cassock'd priest rode onwards,
And vanish'd with his mule.
And Neckan in the twilight grey 55
Wept by the river pool.

In summer, on the headlands,
The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
And sings this plaintive song. 60

A DREAM

Was it a dream? We sail'd, I thought we sail'd,
Martin and I, down a green Alpine stream,
Under o'erhanging pines; the morning sun,
On the wet umbrage of their glossy tops,
On the red pinings of their forest floor, 5
Drew a warm scent abroad; behind the pines
The mountain skirts, with all their sylvan change
Of bright-leaf'd chestnuts, and moss'd walnut-trees,
And the frail scarlet-berried ash, began.
Swiss chalets glitter'd on the dewy slopes, 10
And from some swarded shelf high up, there came
Notes of wild pastoral music: over all
Rang'd, diamond-bright, the eternal wall of snow.
Upon the mossy rocks at the stream's edge,
Back'd by the pines, a plank-built cottage stood, 15
Bright in the sun; the climbing gourd-plant's leaves

Muffled its walls, and on the stone-strewn roof
 Lay the warm golden gourds ; golden, within,
 Under the eaves, peer'd rows of Indian corn.
 We shot beneath the cottage with the stream. 20
 On the brown rude-carv'd balcony two Forms
 Came forth—Olivia's, Marguerite ! and thine.
 Clad were they both in white, flowers in their breast ;
 Straw hats bedeck'd their heads, with ribbons blue
 Which wav'd, and on their shoulders fluttering play'd.
 They saw us, they conferr'd ; their bosoms heav'd, 26
 And more than mortal impulse fill'd their eyes.
 Their lips mov'd ; their white arms, wav'd eagerly,
 Flash'd once, like falling streams :—we rose, we gaz'd :
 One moment, on the rapid's top, our boat 30
 Hung pois'd—and then the darting River of Life,
 Loud thundering, bore us by : swift, swift it foam'd :
 Black under cliffs it rac'd, round headlands shone.
 Soon the plank'd cottage 'mid the sun-warmed pines
 Faded, the moss, the rocks ; us burning Plains 35
 Bristled with cities, us the Sea receiv'd.

REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,
 And never a spray of yew.
 In quiet she reposes :
 Ah ! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required : 5
 She bath'd it in smiles of glee.
 But her heart was tired, tired,
 And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
 In mazes of heat and sound. 10

But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample Spirit,
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty Hall of Death.

15

THE SCHOLAR GIPSY

Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill ;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes :
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropp'd grasses shoot another head. 5
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green ;
Come, Shepherd, and again renew the quest. 10

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruise,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use ;
Here will I sit and wait, 16
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day. 20

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-reap'd field,
And here till sun-down, Shepherd, will I be.
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see

Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep : 25
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfum'd showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade ;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers : 30

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again,
The story of that Oxford scholar poor
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tir'd of knocking at Preferment's door, 35
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the Gipsy lore,
And roam'd the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deem'd, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more. 40

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars whom at college erst he knew
Met him, and of his way of life enquir'd.
Whereat he answer'd, that the Gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desir'd 45
The workings of men's brains ;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they
will :
“ And I,” he said, “ the secret of their art,
When fully learn'd, will to the world impart :
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this
skill.”

This said, he left them, and return'd no more, 51
But rumours hung about the country side
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey, 55
The same the Gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring :

At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle bench, the smock-frock'd
boors

Had found him seated at their entering, 60

But, mid their drink and clatter, he would fly :

And I myself seem half to know thy looks,

And put the shepherds, Wanderer, on thy trace ;

And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks

I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet place ; 65

Or in my boat I lie

Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer heats,

Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,

And watch the warm green-muffled Cumner hills,

And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground. 71

Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,

Returning home on summer nights, have met

Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe,

Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet, 75

As the slow punt swings round :

And leaning backwards in a pensive dream,

And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers

Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,

And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream. 80

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.

Maidens who from the distant hamlets come

To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,

Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee
roam,

Or cross a stile into the public way. 85

Oft thou hast given them store

Of flowers—the frail-leaf'd, white anemone—

Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of summer eves—

And purple orchises with spotted leaves—

But none has words she can report of thee. 90

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
 In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
 Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass
 Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering
 Thames,
 To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass, 95
 Have often pass'd thee near
 Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown :
 Mark'd thy outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
 Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air ;
 But, when they came from bathing, thou wert
 gone. 100

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
 Where at her open door the housewife darns,
 Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
 To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
 Children, who early range these slopes and late 105
 For cresses from the rills,
 Have known thee watching, all an April day,
 The springing pastures and the feeding kine ;
 And mark'd thee, when the stars come out and
 shine,
 Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In Autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood, 111
 Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edg'd way
 Pitch their smok'd tents, and every bush you see
 With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds of grey,
 Above the forest ground call'd Thessaly— 115
 The blackbird picking food
 Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all ;
 So often has he known thee past him stray
 Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd spray,
 And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill 121
 Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,

Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
And thou hast climb'd the hill 126
And gain'd the white brow of the Cumner range,
Turn'd once to watch, while thick the snowflakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequester'd
grange. 130

But what—I dream! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wander'd from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a Gipsy tribe: 135
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid;
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave—
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade. 140

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours.
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
'Tis that from change to change their being rolls:
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls, 145
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having us'd our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tir'd upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit 149
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

Thou hast not liv'd, why should'st thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire:
Else wert thou long since number'd with the dead
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire.
The generations of thy peers are fled, 155
And we ourselves shall go;

But thou possessest an immortal lot,
 And we imagine thee exempt from age
 And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
 Because thou hadst—what we, alas, have not !

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers 161
 Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
 Firm to their mark, not spent on other things ;
 Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
 Which much to have tried, in much been baffled,
 brings. 165

O Life unlike to ours !
 Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
 Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
 And each half lives a hundred different lives ; 169
 Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven : and we,
 Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
 Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
 Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
 Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd ;
 For whom each year we see 176
 Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new ;
 Who hesitate and falter life away,
 And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
 Ah, do not we, Wanderer, await it too ? 180

Yes, we await it, but it still delays,
 And then we suffer ; and amongst us One,
 Who most has suffer'd, takes dejectedly
 His seat upon the intellectual throne ;
 And all his store of sad experience he 185
 Lays bare of wretched days ;
 Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
 And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
 And how the breast was sooth'd, and how the head,
 And all his hourly varied anodynes. 190

This for our wisest : and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear
With close-lipp'd Patience for our only friend,
Sad Patience, too near neighbour to Despair : 195
But none has hope like thine.

Thou through the fields and through the woods dost
stray,

Roaming the country side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,

And every doubt long blown by time away. 200

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames ;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear ! 206

Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood !
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude. 210

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silver'd branches of the glade—
Far on the forest skirts, where none pursue, 215
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales. 220

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly !
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest ;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,

Like us distracted, and like us unblest. 225
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made :
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles ! 231
—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow 235
Among the Ægean isles :
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
Green bursting figs, and tunnies steep'd in brine ,
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted Masters of the waves ; 241
And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail,
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily, 245
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the Western Straits, and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of
foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come ;
And on the beach undid his corded bales. 250

STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

THROUGH Alpine meadows, soft-suffused
With rain, where thick the crocus blows,
Past the dark forges long disused,
The mule-track from Saint Laurent goes.

The bridge is cross'd, and slow we ride,
Through forest, up the mountain-side.

5

The autumnal evening darkens round,
The wind is up, and drives the rain ;
While hark ! far down, with strangled sound
Doth the Dead Guiers' stream complain,
Where that wet smoke among the woods
Over his boiling cauldron broods.

10

Swift rush the spectral vapours white
Past limestone scars with ragged pines,
Showing—then blotting from our sight.
Halt ! through the cloud-drift something shines !
High in the valley, wet and drear,
The huts of Courrierie appear.

15

Strike leftward ! cries our guide ; and higher
Mounts up the stony forest-way.
At last the encircling trees retire ;
Look ! through the showery twilight grey
What pointed roofs are these advance ?
A palace of the Kings of France ?

20

Approach, for what we seek is here.
Alight and sparely sup and wait
For rest in this outbuilding near ;
Then cross the sward and reach that gate ;
Knock ; pass the wicket ! Thou art come
To the Carthusians' world-famed home.

25

30

The silent courts, where night and day
Into their stone-carved basins cold
The splashing icy fountains play,
The humid corridors behold,
Where ghostlike in the deepening night
Cowl'd forms brush by in gleaming white :

35

The chapel, where no organ's peal
Invests the stern and naked prayer.
With penitential cries they kneel
And wrestle ; rising then, with bare
And white uplifted faces stand,
Passing the Host from hand to hand ;

40

Each takes ; and then his visage wan
Is buried in his cowl once more.
The cells—the suffering Son of Man
Upon the wall ! the knee-worn floor !
And, where they sleep, that wooden bed,
Which shall their coffin be, when dead.

45

The library, where tract and tome
Not to feed priestly pride are there,
To hymn the conquering march of Rome,
Nor yet to amuse, as ours are ;
They paint of souls the inner strife,
Their drops of blood, their death in life.

50

The garden, overgrown—yet mild
Those fragrant herbs are flowering there !
Strong children of the Alpine wild
Whose culture is the brethren's care ;
Of human tasks their only one,
And cheerful works beneath the sun.

55

60

Those halls too, destined to contain
Each its own pilgrim host of old,
From England, Germany, or Spain—
All are before me ! I behold
The House, the Brotherhood austere !
And what am I, that I am here ?

65

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
And purged its faith, and trimm'd its fire,
Show'd me the high white star of Truth,
There bade me gaze, and there aspire ;

70

Even now their whispers pierce the gloom :
What dost thou in this living tomb ?

Forgive me, masters of the mind !
At whose behest I long ago
So much unlearnt, so much resign'd !
I come not here to be your foe. 75
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,
To curse and to deny your truth ;

Not as their friend or child I speak !
But as on some far northern strand, 80
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek
In pity and mournful awe might stand
Before some fallen Runic stone—
For both were faiths, and both are gone.

Wandering between two worlds, one dead, 85
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head,
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.
Their faith, my tears, the world deride ;
I come to shed them at their side. 90

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,
Ye solemn seats of holy pain !
Take me, cowl'd forms, and fence me round,
Till I possess my soul again !
Till free my thoughts before me roll, 95
Not chafed by hourly false control.

For the world cries your faith is now
But a dead time's exploded dream ;
My melancholy, sciolists say,
Is a pass'd mode, an outworn theme— 100
As if the world had ever had
A faith, or sciolists been sad.

Ah, if it *be* pass'd, take away,
At least, the restlessness—the pain !
Be man henceforth no more a prey
To these out-dated stings again !
The nobleness of grief is gone—
Ah, leave us not the fret alone !

105

But, if you cannot give us ease,
Last of the race of them who grieve
Here leave us to die out with these
Last of the people who believe !
Silent, while years engrave the brow ;
Silent—the best are silent now.

110

Achilles ponders in his tent,
The kings of modern thought are dumb ;
Silent they are, though not content,
And wait to see the future come.
They have the grief men had of yore,
But they contend and cry no more.

115
120

Our fathers water'd with their tears
This sea of time whereon we sail ;
Their voices were in all men's ears
Who pass'd within their puissant hail.
Still the same Ocean round us raves,
But we stand mute, and watch the waves.

125

For what avail'd it, all the noise
And outcry of the former men ?
Say, have their sons obtain'd more joys ?
Say, is life lighter now than then ?
The sufferers died, they left their pain ;
The pangs which tortured them remain.

130

What helps it now, that Byron bore,
With haughty scorn which mock'd the smart,
Through Europe to the Ætolian shore

135

The pageant of his bleeding heart ?
That thousands counted every groan,
And Europe made his woe her own ?

What boots it, Shelley ! that the breeze
Carried thy lovely wail away,
Musical through Italian trees
That fringe thy soft blue Spezzian bay ?
Inheritors of thy distress
Have restless hearts one throb the less ?

140

Or are we easier, to have read,
O Obermann ! the sad, stern page,
Which tells us how thou hidd'st thy head
From the fierce tempest of thine age
In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,
Or chalets near the Alpine snow ?

145

150

Ye slumber in your silent grave !
The world, which for an idle day
Grace to your mood of sadness gave,
Long since hath flung her weeds away.
The eternal trifter breaks your spell ;
But we—we learnt your lore too well !

155

There may, perhaps, yet dawn an age,
More fortunate, alas ! than we,
Which without hardness will be sage,
And gay without frivolity.
Sons of the world, oh, haste those years ;
But, till they rise, allow our tears !

160

Allow them ! We admire with awe
The exulting thunder of your race ;
You give the universe your law,
You triumph over time and space.
Your pride of life, your tireless powers,
We mark them, but they are not ours.

165

We are like children rear'd in shade
Beneath some old-world abbey wall 170
Forgotten in a forest-glade
And secret from the eyes of all ;
Deep, deep the greenwood round them waves,
Their abbey, and its close of graves.

But, where the road runs near the stream, 175
Oft through the trees they catch a glance
Of passing troops in the sun's beam—
Pennon, and plume, and flashing lance !
Forth to the world those soldiers fare,
To life, to cities, and to war. 180

And through the woods another way,
Faint bugle-notes from far are borne,
Where hunters gather, staghounds bay,
Round some old forest-lodge at morn ;
Gay dames are there in sylvan green, 185
Laughter and cries—those notes between !

The banners flashing through the trees
Make their blood dance and chain their eyes ;
That bugle-music on the breeze
Arrests them with a charm'd surprise. 190
Banner by turns and bugle woo :
Ye shy recluses, follow too !

O children, what do ye reply ?—
“ Action and pleasure, will ye roam
Through these secluded dells to cry 195
And call us ? but too late ye come !
Too late for us your call ye blow
Whose bent was taken long ago.

“ Long since we pace this shadow'd nave ;
We watch those yellow tapers shine, 200
Emblems of hope over the grave,

TO MARGUERITE

125

In the high altar's depth divine ;
The organ carries to our ear
Its accents of another sphere.

“ Fenced early in this cloistral round
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,
How should we grow in other ground ?
How should we flower in foreign air ?
Pass, banners, pass, and bugles, cease !
And leave our desert to its peace ! ”

TO MARGUERITE

We were apart ! yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be ;
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee ;
Nor fear'd but thy love likewise grew, 5
Like mine, each day more tried, more true.

The fault was grave ! I might have known,
What far too soon, alas ! I learn'd—
The heart can bind itself alone,
And faith is often unreturn'd. 10
Self-sway'd our feelings ebb and swell !
Thou lov'st no more ;—Farewell ! Farewell !

Farewell!—and thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart
From thy remote and spherèd course
To haunt the place where passions reign—
Back to thy solitude again!

Back ! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer-night, 20

Flash through her pure immortal frame,
 When she forsook the starry height
 To hang over Endymion's sleep
 Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep—

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved 25
 How vain a thing is mortal love,
 Wandering in Heaven, far removed ;
 But thou hast long had place to prove
 This truth—to prove, and make thine own :
 “Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone.” 30

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
 Which touch thee are unmating things—
 Ocean and clouds and night and day ;
 Lorn autumns and triumphant springs ;
 And life, and others' joy and pain, 35
 And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men !—for they, at least,
 Have dream'd two human hearts might blend
 In one, and were through faith released
 From isolation without end 40
 Prolong'd ; nor knew, although not less
 Alone than thou, their loneliness !

SAINT BRANDAN

SAINT BRANDAN sails the northern main ;
 The brotherhoods of saints are glad.
 He greets them once, he sails again.
 So late !—such storms !—The Saint is mad !

He heard across the howling seas 5
 Chime convent bells on wintry nights,
 He saw on spray-swept Hebrides
 Twinkle the monastery lights ;

But north, still north, Saint Brandan steer'd ;
And now no bells, no convents more !
The hurtling Polar lights are near'd,
The sea without a human shore. 10

At last—(it was the Christmas night,
Stars shone after a day of storm)—
He sees float past an iceberg white,
And on it—Christ !—a living form ! 15

That furtive mien, that scowling eye,
Of hair that red and tufted fell—
It is—Oh, where shall Brandan fly ?—
The traitor Judas, out of hell ! 20

Palsied with terror, Brandan sate,
The moon was bright, the iceberg near.
He hears a voice sigh humbly : " Wait !
By high permission I am here.

" One moment wait, thou holy man !
On earth my crime, my death, they knew ;
My name is under all men's ban ;
Ah, tell them of my respite too ! 25

" Tell them, one blessed Christmas night—
(It was the first after I came,
Breathing self-murder, frenzy, spite,
To rue my guilt in endless flame)— 30

" I felt, as I in torment lay
'Mid the souls plagued by heavenly power,
An angel touch my arm, and say :
Go hence, and cool thyself an hour ! 35

" ' Ah, whence this mercy, Lord ? ' I said.
The Leper recollect, said he,
Who ask'd the passers-by for aid,
In Joppa, and thy charity. 40

“ Then I remember’d how I went,
In Joppa, through the public street,
One morn, when the sirocco spent
Its storms of dust, with burning heat ;

“ And in the street a Leper sate, 45
Shivering with fever, naked, old ;
Sand raked his sores from heel to pate,
The hot wind fever’d him five-fold.

“ He gazed upon me as I pass’d,
And murmur’d : *Help me, or I die !*— 50
To the poor wretch my cloak I cast,
Saw him look eased, and hurried by.

“ Oh, Brandan, think what grace divine,
What blessing must true goodness shower,
If semblance of it faint, like mine, 55
Hath such inestimable power !

“ Well-fed, well-clothed, well-friended, I
Did that chance act of good, that one !
Then went my way to kill and lie—
Forgot my good as soon as done. 60

“ That germ of kindness, in the womb
Of mercy caught, did not expire ;
Outlives my guilt, outlives my doom,
And friends me in the pit of fire.

“ Once every year, when carols wake, 65
On earth, the Christmas night’s repose,
Arising from the sinners’ lake,
I journey to these healing snows.

“ I stanch with ice my burning breast,
With silence balm my whirling brain. 70
O Brandan ! to this hour of rest,
That Joppa leper’s ease was pain ! ”—

Tears started to Saint Brandan's eyes ;
He bow'd his head ; he breathed a prayer.
When he look'd up—tenantless lies
The iceberg in the frosty air !

75

A SOUTHERN NIGHT

THE sandy spits, the shore-lock'd lakes,
Melt into open, moonlit sea ;
The soft Mediterranean breaks
At my feet, free.

Dotting the fields of corn and vine
Like ghosts, the huge, gnarl'd olives stand ;
Behind, that lovely mountain-line !
While by the strand

5

Cette, with its glistening houses white,
Curves with the curving beach away
To where the lighthouse beacons bright
Far in the bay.

10

Ah, such a night, so soft, so lone,
So moonlit, saw me once of yore
Wander unquiet, and my own
Vext heart deplore !

15

But now that trouble is forgot ;
Thy memory, thy pain, to-night,
My brother ! and thine early lot,
Possess me quite.

20

The murmur of this Midland deep
Is heard to-night around thy grave
There, where Gibraltar's cannon'd steep
O'erfrowns the wave.

For there, with bodily anguish keen, 25
With Indian heats at last fordone,
With public toil and private teen,
Thou sank'st, alone.

Slow to a stop, at morning grey,
I see the smoke-crown'd vessel come ; 30
Slow round her paddles dies away
The seething foam.

A boat is lower'd from her side ;
Ah, gently place him on the bench !
That spirit—if all have not yet died— 35
A breath might quench.

Is this the eye, the footstep fast,
The mien of youth we used to see,
Poor, gallant boy !—for such thou wast,
Still art, to me. 40

The limbs their wonted tasks refuse,
The eyes are glazed, thou canst not speak ;
And whiter than thy white burnous
That wasted cheek !

Enough ! The boat, with quiet shock, 45
Unto its haven coming nigh,
Touches, and on Gibraltar's rock
Lands thee, to die.

Ah me ! Gibraltar's strand is far,
But farther yet across the brine 50
Thy dear wife's ashes buried are,
Remote from thine.

For there where Morning's sacred fount
Its golden rain on earth confers,
The snowy Himalayan Mount 55
O'ershadows hers.

Strange irony of Fate, alas,
Which for two jaded English saves,
When from their dusty life they pass,
Such peaceful graves ! 60

In cities should we English lie,
Where cries are rising ever new,
And men's incessant stream goes by ;
We who pursue

Our business with unslackening stride, 65
Traverse in troops, with care-fill'd breast,
The soft Mediterranean side,
The Nile, the East,

And see all sights from pole to pole,
And glance, and nod, and bustle by ; 70
And never once possess our soul
Before we die.

Not by those hoary Indian hills,
Not by this gracious Midland sea
Whose floor to-night sweet moonshine fills, 75
Should our graves be !

Some sage, to whom the world was dead,
And men were specks, and life a play ;
Who made the roots of trees his bed,
And once a day 80

With staff and gourd his way did bend
To villages and homes of man,
For food to keep him till he end
His mortal span,

And the pure goal of Being reach ; 85
Grey-headed, wrinkled, clad in white,
Without companion, without speech,
By day and night

Pondering God's mysteries untold,
And tranquil as the glacier snows— 90
He by those Indian mountains old
Might well repose !

Some grey crusading knight austere,
Who bore Saint Louis company
And came home hurt to death and here 95
Landed to die ;

Some youthful troubadour whose tongue
Fill'd Europe once with his love-pain,
Who here outwearied sunk, and sung
His dying strain ; 100

Some girl who here from castle-bower,
With furtive step and cheek of flame,
'Twixt myrtle-hedges all in flower
By moonlight came

To meet her pirate-lover's ship, 105
And from the wave-kiss'd marble stair
Beckon'd him on, with quivering lip
And unbound hair,

And lived some moons in happy trance,
Then learnt his death, and pined away— 110
Such by these waters of romance
'Twas meet to lay !

But you—a grave for knight or sage,
Romantic, solitary, still,
O spent ones of a work-day age ! 115
Befits you ill.

So sang I ; but the midnight breeze
Down to the brimm'd moon-charmed main
Comes softly through the olive-trees,
And checks my strain. 120

I think of her, whose gentle tongue
 All plaint in her own cause controll'd ;
 Of thee I think, my brother ! young
 In heart, high-soul'd ;

That comely face, that cluster'd brow, 125
 That cordial hand, that bearing free,
 I see them still, I see them now,
 Shall always see !

And what but gentleness untired,
 And what but noble feeling warm, 130
 Wherever shown, howe'er attired,
 Is grace, is charm ?

What else is all these waters are,
 What else is steep'd in lucid sheen,
 What else is bright, what else is fair, 135
 What else serene ?

Mild o'er her grave, ye mountains, shine !
 Gently by his, ye waters, glide !
 To that in you which is divine
 They were allied. 140

THYRSIS

A MONODY, *to commemorate the author's friend*, ARTHUR
 HUGH CLOUGH, *who died at Florence*, 1861.

Thus yesterday, to-day, to-morrow come,
 They hustle one another and they pass ;
 But all our hustling morrows only make
 The smooth to-day of God.

From LUCRETIVS, *an unpublished Tragedy.*

How changed is here each spot man makes or fills !
 In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the same ;
 The village-street its haunted mansion lacks,

And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,
And from the roofs the twisted chimney-stacks ; 5
Are ye too changed, ye hills ?
See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men
To-night from Oxford up your pathway strays !
Here came I often, often, in old days ;
Thyrsis and I ; we still had Thyrsis then. 10

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth Farm,
Up past the wood, to where the elm-tree crowns
The hill behind whose ridge the sunset flames ?
The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,
The Vale, the three lone weirs, the youthful 15
Thames ?—
This winter-eve is warm,
Humid the air ; leafless, yet soft as spring,
The tender purple spray on copse and briers ;
And that sweet City with her dreaming spires,
She needs not June for beauty's heightening, 20

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-night !
Only, methinks, some loss of habit's power
Befalls me wandering through this upland dim ;
Once pass'd I blindfold here, at any hour,
Now seldom come I, since I came with him. 25
That single elm-tree bright
Against the west—I miss it ! is it gone ?
We prized it dearly ; while it stood, we said,
Our friend, the Scholar-Gipsy, was not dead ;
While the tree lived, he in these fields lived on. 30

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here !
But once I knew each field, each flower, each stick ;
And with the country-folk acquaintance made
By barn in threshing-time, by new-built rick.
Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we first assay'd. 35
Ah me ! this many a year
My pipe is lost, my shepherd's-holiday !

Needs must I lose them, needs with heavy heart
 Into the world and wave of men depart ;
 But Thyrsis of his own will went away. 40

It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest.
 He loved each simple joy the country yields,
 He loved his mates ; but yet he could not keep,
 For that a shadow lower'd on the fields,
 Here with the shepherds and the silly sheep. 45
 Some life of men unblest
 He knew, which made him droop, and fill'd his
 head.
 He went ; his piping took a troubled sound
 Of storms that rage outside our happy ground ;
 He could not wait their passing, he is dead ! 50

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,
 When the year's primal burst of bloom is o'er,
 Before the roses and the longest day—
 When garden-walks, and all the grassy floor,
 With blossoms, red and white, of fallen May, 55
 And chestnut-flowers are strewn—
 So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
 From the wet field, through the vext garden-
 trees
 Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze :
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I. 60

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go ?
 Soon will the high Midsummer pomps come on,
 Soon will the musk carnations break and swell,
 Soon shall we have gold-dusted snapdragon,
 Sweet-William with its homely cottage-smell, 65
 And stocks in fragrant blow ;
 Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
 And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
 And groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
 And the full moon, and the white evening-star. 70

He hearkens not ! light comer, he is flown !
 What matters it ? next year he will return,
 And we shall have him in the sweet spring-days,
 With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling fern,
 And blue-bells trembling by the forest-ways, 75
 And scent of hay new-mown.
 But Thyrsis never more we swains shall see !
 See him come back, and cut a smoother reed,
 And blow a strain the world at last shall heed—
 For Time, not Corydon, hath conquer'd thee. 80

Alack, for Corydon no rival now !—
 But when Sicilian shepherds lost a mate,
 Some good survivor with his flute would go,
 Piping a ditty sad for Bion's fate,
 And cross the unpermitted ferry's flow. 85
 And relax Pluto's brow,
 And make leap up with joy the beauteous head
 Of Proserpine, among whose crowned hair
 Are flowers, first open'd on Sicilian air,
 And flute his friend, like Orpheus, from the dead. 90

O easy access to the hearer's grace
 When Dorian shepherds sang to Proserpine !
 For she herself had trod Sicilian fields,
 She knew the Dorian water's gush divine,
 She knew each lily white which Enna yields, 95
 Each rose with blushing face ;
 She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian strain.
 But ah, of our poor Thames she never heard !
 Her foot the Cumnor cowslips never stirr'd !
 And we should tease her with our plaint in vain. 100

Well ! wind-dispers'd and vain the words will be,
 Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
 In the old haunt, and find our tree-topp'd hill !
 Who, if not I, for questing here hath power ?
 I know the wood which hides the daffodil, 105

I know the Fyfield tree,
I know what white, what purple fritillaries
The grassy harvest of the river-fields,
Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields,
And what sedg'd brooks are Thames's tributaries ;

I know these slopes ; who knows them if not I ?—
But many a dingle on the loved hill-side, 112
With thorns once studded, old, white-blossom'd
trees,
Where thick the cowslips grew, and, far descried,
High tower'd the spikes of purple orchises, 115
Hath since our day put by
The coronals of that forgotten time.
Down each green bank hath gone the ploughboy's
team,
And only in the hidden brookside gleam
Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime. 120

Where is the girl, who, by the boatman's door,
Above the locks, above the boating throng,
Unmoor'd our skiff, when, through the Wytham
flats,
Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet among,
And darting swallows, and light water-gnats, 125
We track'd the shy Thames shore ?
Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny swell
Of our boat passing heav'd the river-grass,
Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass ?—
They all are gone, and thou art gone as well. 130

Yes, thou art gone ! and round me too the night
In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.
I see her veil draw soft across the day,
I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
The cheek grown thin, the brown hair sprent with
grey ; 135
I feel her finger light

Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train ;
The foot less prompt to meet the morning dew,
The heart less bounding at emotion new,
And hope, once crush'd, less quick to spring again. 140

And long the way appears, which seem'd so short
To the unpractis'd eye of sanguine youth ;
And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,
The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth,
Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and bare ! 145
Unbreachable the fort
Of the long-batter'd world uplifts its wall.
And strange and vain the earthly turmoil grows,
And near and real the charm of thy repose,
And night as welcome as a friend would fall. 150

But hush ! the upland hath a sudden loss
Of quiet ;—Look ! adown the dusk hillside,
A troop of Oxford hunters going home,
As in old days, jovial and talking, ride !
From hunting with the Berkshire hounds they
come— 155
Quick, let me fly, and cross
Into yon further field !—'Tis done ; and see,
Back'd by the sunset, which doth glorify
The orange and pale violet evening-sky,
Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree ! the Tree ! 160

I take the omen ! Eve lets down her veil,
The white fog creeps from bush to bush about,
The west unflushes, the high stars grow bright,
And in the scatter'd farms the lights come out.
I cannot reach the Signal-Tree to-night, 165
Yet, happy omen, hail !
Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno vale
(For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids keep
The morningless and unawakening sleep
Under the flowery oleanders pale), 170

Hear it, O Thyrsis, still our Tree is there!—

Ah, vain! These English fields, this upland dim,

These brambles pale with mist engarlanded,

That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not for him.

To a boon southern country he is fled,

175

And now in happier air,

Wandering with the great Mother's train divine

(And purer or more subtle soul than thee,

I trow, the mighty Mother doth not see!)

Within a folding of the Apennine,

180

Thou hearest the immortal strains of old.

Putting his sickle to the perilous grain

In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian king,

For thee the Lityerses song again

Young Daphnis with his silver voice doth sing ; 185

Sings his Sicilian fold,

His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded eyes ;

And how a call celestial round him rang

And heavenward from the fountain-brink he sprang,

And all the marvel of the golden skies.

190

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest here

Sole in these fields ; yet will I not despair ;

Despair I will not, while I yet descry

'Neath the soft canopy of English air

That lonely Tree against the western sky.

195

Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,

Our Gipsy-Scholar haunts, outliving thee !

Fields where soft sheep from cages pull the hay,

Woods with anemones in flower till May,

Know him a wanderer still ; then why not me ? 200

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,

Shy to illumine ; and I seek it too.

This does not come with houses or with gold,

With place, with honour, and a flattering crew ;

'Tis not in the world's market bought and sold. 205

But the smooth-slipping weeks

Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired ;
 Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
 He wends unfollow'd, he must house alone ;
 Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired. 210

Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wert bound,
 Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour ;
 Men gave thee nothing, but this happy quest,
 If men esteem'd thee feeble, gave thee power,
 If men procured thee trouble, gave thee rest 215
 And this rude Cumnor ground,
 Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet fields,
 Here cam'st thou in thy jocund youthful time,
 Here was thine height of strength, thy golden prime ;
 And still the haunt beloved a virtue yields. 220

What though the music of thy rustic flute
 Kept not for long its happy, country tone,
 Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy note
 Of men contention-tost, of men who groan,
 Which task'd thy pipe too sore, and tired thy 225
 throat—
 It fail'd, and thou wast mute ;
 Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,
 And long with men of care thou couldst not stay,
 And soon thy foot resumed its wandering way,
 Left human haunt, and on alone till night. 230

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here !
 'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,
 Thyrsis, in reach of sheep-bells is my home !
 Then through the great town's harsh, heart-wearying
 roar,
 Let in thy voice a whisper often come, 235
 To chase fatigue and fear :
Why faintest thou ? I wander'd till I died.
Roam on ! the light we sought is shining still.
Dost thou ask proof ? Our Tree yet crowns the hill,
Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside. 240

A PICTURE AT NEWSTEAD

WHAT made my heart, at Newstead, fullest swell?—
 'Twas not the thought of Byron, of his cry
 Stormily sweet, his Titan agony;
 It was the sight of that Lord Arundel

Who struck, in heat, the child he loved so well, 5
 And the child's reason flickered, and did die.
 Painted (he will'd it) in the gallery
 They hang; the picture doth the story tell.

Behold the stern, mail'd father, staff in hand!
 The little fair-hair'd son, with vacant gaze, 10
 Where no more lights of sense or knowledge are!

Methinks the woe which made that father stand
 Baring his dumb remorse to future days,
 Was woe than Byron's woe more tragic far.

RACHEL. III

SPRUNG from the blood of Israel's scatter'd race,
 At a mean inn in German Aarau born,
 To forms from antique Greece and Rome uptorn,
 Trick'd out with a Parisian speech and face,

Imparting life renew'd, old classic grace, 5
 Then soothing with thy Christian strain forlorn,
 A-Kempis! her departing soul outworn,
 While by her bedside Hebrew rites have place—

Ah, not the radiant spirit of Greece alone
 She had—one power, which made her breast its
 home! 10

In her, like us, there clash'd, contending powers,
 Germany, France, Christ, Moses, Athens, Rome
 The strife, the mixture in her soul, are ours ;
 Her genius and her glory are her own.

EAST LONDON

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
 Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
 And the pale weaver, through his windows seen
 In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited ;

I met a preacher there I knew, and said : 5
 " Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in this scene ? "
 " Bravely ! " said he ; " for I of late have been
 Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread*."

O human soul ! as long as thou canst so
 Set up a mark of everlasting light, 10
 Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,

To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam,
 Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night !
 Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.

WEST LONDON

CROUCH'D on the pavement close by Belgrave Square !
 A tramp I saw, ill, moody, and tongue-tied ;
 A babe was in her arms, and at her side
 A girl ; their clothes were rags, their feet were bare.

Some labouring men, whose work lay somewhere there,
 Pass'd opposite ; she touch'd her girl, who hied 6

Across, and begg'd, and came back satisfied.
The rich she had let pass with frozen stare.

Thought I : Above her state this spirit towers ;
She will not ask of aliens, but of friends,
Of sharers in a common human fate.

10

She turns from that cold succour, which attends
The unknown little from the unknowing great,
And points us to a better time than ours.

ANTI-DESPERATION

LONG fed on boundless hopes, O race of man,
How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare !
Christ, some one says, was human as we are ;
No judge eyes us from heaven, our sin to scan ;

We live no more, when we have done our span 5
' Well, then, for Christ,' thou answerest, ' who can care ?
From sin, which heaven records not, why forbear ?
Live we like brutes our life without a plan ! '

So answerest thou ; but why not rather say :
' Hath man no second life ?—Pitch this one high ! 10
Sits there no judge in heaven, our sin to see ?—

' More strictly, then, the inward judge obey !
Was Christ a man like us ?—Ah ! let us try
If we then, too, can be such men as he ! '

IMMORTALITY

FOIL'D by our fellow men, depress'd, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,

*And, Patience ! in another life, we say,
The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne !*

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings ; or will they,
Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervours of the heavenly morn ?

5

No, no ! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun ;
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,

10

From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

WORLDLY PLACE

Even in a palace, life may be led well !
So spoke the imperial sage, purest of men,
Marcus Aurelius.—But the stifling den
Of common life, where, crowded up pell-mell,

Our freedom for a little bread we sell,
And drudge under some foolish master's ken,
Who rates us, if we peer outside our pen—
Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell ?

5

Even in a palace ! On his truth sincere,
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever came ;
And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame

10

Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,
I'll stop, and say : ' There were no succour here !
The aids to noble life are all within.'

THE DIVINITY

"YES, write it in the rock!" Saint Bernard said,
 "Grave it on brass with adamantine pen!
 'Tis God himself becomes apparent, when
 God's wisdom and God's goodness are display'd,

"For God of these his attributes is made."— 5
 Well spake the impetuous Saint, and bore of men
 The suffrage captive; now, not one in ten
 Recalls the obscure opposer he outweigh'd.

God's wisdom and God's goodness!—Aye, but fools
 Mis-define these till God knows them no more. 10
Wisdom and goodness, they are God!—what schools

Have yet so much as heard this simpler lore?
 This no Saint preaches, and this no Church rules;
 'Tis in the desert, now and heretofore.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD WITH THE KID

He saves the sheep, the goats he doth not save!
 So rang Tertullian's sentence, on the side
 Of that unpitying Phrygian sect which cried:
 "Him can no fount of fresh forgiveness lave,

"Who sins, once wash'd by the baptismal wave!" 5
 So spake the fierce Tertullian. But she sigh'd,
 The infant Church; of love she felt the tide
 Stream of her from her Lord's yet recent grave.

And then she smiled, and in the Catacombs,
 With eye suffused but heart inspired true, 10
 On those walls subterranean, where she hid

Her head in ignominy, death, and tombs,
 She her Good Shepherd's hasty image drew ;
 And on his shoulders, not a lamb, a kid.

AUSTERITY OF POETRY

THAT son of Italy who tried to blow,
 Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred song,
 In his light youth amid a festal throng
 Sate with his bride to see a public show.

Fair was the bride, and on her front did glow 5
 Youth like a star ; and what to youth belong,
 Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation strong.
 A prop gave way ! crash fell a platform ! lo,

Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death, she lay !
 Shuddering they drew her garments off—and found 10
 A robe of sackcloth next the smooth, white skin.

Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse ! young, gay,
 Radiant, adorn'd outside ; a hidden ground
 Of thought and of austerity within.

MONICA'S LAST PRAYER

“ OH could thy grave at home, at Carthage, be ! ”—
Care not for that, and lay me where I fall.
Everywhere heard will be the judgement-call.
But at God's altar, oh ! remember me.

Thus Monica, and died in Italy. 5
 Yet fervent had her longing been, through all
 Her course, for home at last, and burial
 With her own husband, by the Libyan sea,

Had been ; but at the end, to her pure soul
All tie with all beside seem'd vain and cheap, 10
And union before God the only care.

Creeds pass, rites change, no altar standeth whole ;
Yet we her memory, as she pray'd, will keep,
Keep by this : *Life in God, and union there !*

CALAIS SANDS

A THOUSAND knights have rein'd their steeds
To watch this line of sand-hills run,
Along the never silent Strait,
To Calais glittering in the sun.

To look toward Ardres' Golden Field 5
Across this wide aerial plain,
Which glows as if the Middle Age
Were gorgeous upon earth again.

Oh, that to share this famous scene
I saw, upon the open sand, 10
Thy lovely presence at my side,
Thy shawl, thy look, thy smile, thy hand !

How exquisite thy voice would come,
My darling, on this lonely air !
How sweetly would the fresh sea-breeze 15
Shake loose some lock of soft brown hair !

But now my glance but once hath roved
O'er Calais and its famous plain ;
To England's cliffs my gaze is turn'd,
O'er the blue Strait mine eyes I strain. 20

Thou comest ! Yes, the vessel's cloud
Hangs dark upon the rolling sea !—

Oh that you seabird's wings were mine
To win one instant's glimpse of thee !

I must not spring to grasp thy hand, 25
To woo thy smile, to seek thine eye ;
But I may stand far off, and gaze,
And watch thee pass unconscious by,

And spell thy looks, and guess thy thoughts,
Mixt with the idlers on the pier.— 30
Ah, might I always rest unseen,
So I might have thee always near !

To-morrow hurry through the fields
Of Flanders to the storied Rhine !
To-night those soft-fringed eyes shall close 35
Beneath one roof, my queen ! with mine.

DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the Straits ;—on the French coast, the light
Gleams, and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay. 5
Come to the window, sweet is the night air !
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the ebb meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling, 10
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago 15
Heard it on the Aegaeon, and it brought

Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery ; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea. 20

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd ;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar, 25
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another ! for the world, which seems 30
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain ;
And we are here as on a darkling plain 35
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

THE TERRACE AT BERNE

TEN years !—and to my waking eye
Once more the roofs of Berne appear ;
The rocky banks, the terrace high,
The stream—and do I linger here ?

The clouds are on the Oberland, 5
The Jungfrau snows look faint and far ;
But bright are those green fields at hand,
And through those fields comes down the Aar,

And from the blue twin lakes it comes,
Flows by the town, the church-yard fair, 10
And 'neath the garden-walk it hums,
The house—and is my Marguerite there?

Ah, shall I see thee, while a flush
Of startled pleasure floods thy brow,
Quick through the oleanders brush, 15
And clap thy hands, and cry: '*Tis thou!*

Or hast thou long since wander'd back,
Daughter of France! to France, thy home;
And flitted down the flowery track
Where feet like thine too lightly come? 20

Doth riotous laughter now replace
Thy smile, and rouge, with stony glare,
Thy cheek's soft hue, and fluttering lace
The kerchief that enwound thy hair?

Or is it over?—art thou dead?— 25
Dead?—and no warning shiver ran
Across my heart, to say thy thread
Of life was cut, and closed thy span!

Could from earth's ways that figure slight
Be lost, and I not feel 'twas so? 30
Of that fresh voice the gay delight
Fail from earth's air, and I not know?

Or shall I find thee still, but changed,
But not the Marguerite of thy prime?
With all thy being re-arranged, 35
Pass'd through the crucible of time;

With spirit vanish'd, beauty waned,
And hardly yet a glance, a tone,
A gesture—anything—retain'd
Of all that was my Marguerite's own? 40

I will not know !—for wherefore try
To things by mortal course that live
A shadowy durability
For which they were not meant, to give ?

Like driftwood spars which meet and pass 45
Upon the boundless ocean-plain,
So on the sea of life, alas !
Man nears man, meets, and leaves again

I knew it when my life was young,
I feel it still, now youth is o'er ! 50
The mists are on the mountains hung,
And Marguerite I shall see no more.

STANZAS COMPOSED AT CARNAC

MAY 6, 1859

FAR on its rocky knoll descried
Saint Michael's chapel cuts the sky.
I climb'd ;—beneath me, bright and wide,
Lay the lone coast of Brittany.

Bright in the sunset, weird and still, 5
It lay beside the Atlantic wave,
As if the wizard Merlin's will
Yet charm'd it from his forest grave.

Behind me on their grassy sweep,
Bearded with lichen, scrawl'd and grey, 10
The giant stones of Carnac sleep,
In the mild evening of the May.

No priestly stern procession now
Streams through their rows of pillars old ;

He long'd for it—press'd on !—In vain.
 At the Straits fail'd that spirit brave.
 The South was parent of his pain,
 The South is mistress of his grave.

45

PALLADIUM

SET where the upper streams of Simois flow
 Was the Palladium, high 'mid rock and wood ;
 And Hector was in Ilium, far below,
 And fought, and saw it not, but there it stood.

It stood ; and sun and moonshine rain'd their light 5
 On the pure columns of its glen-built hall.
 Backward and forward roll'd the waves of fight
 Round Troy ; but while this stood, Troy could not fall.

So, in its lovely moonlight, lives the soul.
 Mountains surround it, and sweet virgin air ; 10
 Cold plashing, past it, crystal waters roll ;
 We visit it by moments, ah ! too rare

Men will renew the battle in the plain
 To-morrow ; red with blood will Xanthus be ;
 Hector and Ajax will be there again ; 15
 Helen will come upon the wall to see.

Then we shall rust in shade, or shine in strife,
 And fluctuate 'twixt blind hopes and blind despairs,
 And fancy that we put forth all our life,
 And never know how with the soul it fares. 20

Still doth the soul, from its lone fastness high,
 Upon our life a ruling effluence send ;
 And when it fails, fight as we will, we die,
 And while it lasts, we cannot wholly end.

THE LAST WORD

CREEP into thy narrow bed,
 Creep, and let no more be said !
 Vain thy onset ! all stands fast ;
 Thou thyself must break at last

Let the long contention cease !
 Geese are swans and swans are geese.
 Let them have it how they will !
 Thou art tired ; best be still !

They out-talk'd thee, hiss'd thee, tore thee.
 Better men fared thus before thee ;
 Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,
 Hotly charged—and broke at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb !
 Let the victors, when they come,
 When the forts of folly fall,
 Find thy body by the wall.

A WISH

I ASK not that my bed of death
 From bands of greedy heirs be free ;
 For these besiege the latest breath
 Of fortune's favour'd sons, not me.

I ask not each kind soul to keep
 Tearless, when of my death he hears ;
 Let those who will, if any, weep !
 There are worse plagues on earth than tears.

I ask but that my death may find
 The freedom to my life denied ;

Ask but the folly of mankind,
Then, then at last, to quit my side.

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,
The friends who come, and gape, and go ;
The ceremonious air of gloom—
All, that makes death a hideous show !

15

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,
Some doctor full of phrase and fame,
To shake his sapient head and give
The ill he cannot cure a name.

20

Nor fetch, to take the accustom'd toll
Of the poor sinner bound for death,
His brother doctor of the soul,
To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things—
That undiscover'd mystery
Which one who feels death's winnowing wings
Must needs read clearer, sure, than he !

25

Bring none of these ! but let me be,
While all around in silence lies,
Moved to the window near, and see
Once more before my dying eyes

30

Bathed in the sacred dew of morn
The wide aerial landscape spread—
The world which was ere I was born
The world which lasts when I am dead.

35

Which never was the friend of *one*,
Nor promised love it could not give,
But lit for all its generous sun,
And lived itself, and made us live.

40

There let me gaze, till I become
In soul with what I gaze on wed !

To feel the universe my home ;
To have before my mind—instead

Of the sick-room, the mortal strife, 45
The turmoil for a little breath—
The pure eternal course of life,
Not human combatings with death.

Thus feeling, gazing, let me grow
Compos'd, refresh'd, ennobled, clear , 50
Then willing let my spirit go
To work or wait elsewhere or here !

RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER, 1857

COLDLY, sadly descends
The autumn evening. The Field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace, 5
Silent ;—hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play !
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows ; but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere, 10
Through the gathering darkness, arise
The Chapel walls, in whose bound
Thou, my father ! art laid

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
Of the autumn evening. But ah ! 15
That word, *gloom*, to my mind
Brings thee back in the light
Of thy radiant vigour again !

In the gloom of November we pass'd
Days not of gloom at thy side ;
Seasons impair'd not the ray
Of thine even cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast ; and I stand
In the autumn evening, and think
Of bygone autumns with thee

20

25

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden. For fifteen years,
We who till then in thy shade
Rest'd as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee.

30

35

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now ? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain !
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labour-house vast
Of being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm !

40

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live,
Prompt, unwearied, as here !
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly represses the bad.
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes

45

50

Tread the border-land dim
'Twixt vice and virtue ; reviv'st. 55
Succourest ;—this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth ?—
Most men eddy about 60
Here and there—eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving 65
Nothing, and then they die—
Perish ; and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves
In the moonlit solitudes mild 70
Of the midmost Ocean, have swell'd,
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent, 75
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeful dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes, some of us strive
Not without action to die 80
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave !
We, we have chosen our path—
Path to a clear-purposed goal, 85
Path of advance ! but it leads
A long, steep journey, through sunk
Gorges, o'er mountains in snow !
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth ;

RUGBY CHAPEL

159

Then, on the height, comes the storm !

90

Thunder crashes from rock

To rock, the cataracts reply ;

Lightnings dazzle our eyes ;

Roaring torrents have breach'd

The track, the stream-bed descends

95

In the place where the wayfarer once

Planted his footstep—the spray

Boils o'er its borders ; aloft,

The unseen snow-beds dislodge

Their hanging ruin ;—alas,

100

Havoc is made in our train !

Friends who set forth at our side

Falter, are lost in the storm !

We, we only, are left !

With frowning foreheads, with lips

105

Sternly compress'd, we strain on,

On—and at nightfall, at last,

Come to the end of our way,

To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks ;

Where the gaunt and taciturn Host

110

Stands on the threshold, the wind

Shaking his thin white hairs—

Holds his lantern to scan

Our storm-beat figures, and asks :

Whom in our party we bring ?

115

Whom we have left in the snow ?

Sadly we answer : We bring

Only ourselves ; we lost

Sight of the rest in the storm.

Hardly ourselves we fought through,

120

Stripp'd, without friends, as we are.

Friends, companions, and train

The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*

Be saved, my father ! *alone*

125

Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.
We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we, in our march,
Fain to drop down and to die. 130
Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand !
If, in the paths of the world,
Stones might have wounded thy feet, 135
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing ! to us thou wert still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm.
Therefore to thee it was given 140
Many to save with thyself ;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd ! to come,
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

And through thee I believe 145
In the noble and great who are gone ;
Pure souls honour'd and blest
By former ages who else—
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see— 150
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,
Seem'd but a cry of desire.
Yes ! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd 155
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile ;
But souls temper'd with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good, 160
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God !—or sons
Shall I not call you ? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind, 165
His, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost—
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died ! 170

See ! in the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending ?—A God
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal.— 175
Ah, but the way is so long !
Years they have been in the wild !
Sore thirst plagues them ; the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe.
Factions divide them ; their host 180
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
Ah, keep, keep them combined !
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive !
Sole they shall stray ; in the rocks 185
Labour for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear, 190
Radiant with ardour divine.
Beacons of hope, ye appear !
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow. 195
Ye alight in our van ; at your voice,

Panic, despair, flee away.
 Ye move through the ranks, recall
 The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
 Praise, re-inspire the brave. 200
 Order, courage, return.
 Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
 Follow your steps as ye go.
 Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
 Strengthen the wavering line, 205
 Stablish, continue our march,
 On, to the bound of the waste,
 On, to the City of God

OBERMANN ONCE MORE

"Savez-vous quelque bien qui console du regret d'un monde ?"—
Obermann

GLION ?—Ah, twenty years, it cuts
 All meaning from a name !
 White houses prank where once were huts !
 Glion ! but not the same,

And yet I know not. All unchanged 5
 The turf, the pines, the sky !
 The hills in their old order ranged !
 The lake, with Chillon by !

And 'neath those chestnut-trees, where stiff
 And stony mounts the way, 10
 Their crackling husk-heaps burn, as if
 I left them yesterday.

Across the valley, on that slope,
 The huts of Avant shine—
 Its pines under their branches ope 15
 Ways for the tinkling kine

Full-foaming milk-pails, Alpine fare,
Sweet heaps of fresh-cut grass,
Invite to rest the traveller there
Before he climb the pass—

20

The gentian-flower'd pass, its crown
With yellow spires aflame,
Whence drops the path to Allière down
And walls where Byron came,

By their green river who doth change
His birth-name just below—
Orchard, and croft, and full-stored grange
Nursed by his pastoral flow.

25

But stop!—to fetch back thoughts that stray
Beyond this gracious bound,
The cone of Jaman, pale and grey,
See, in the blue profound!

30

Ah, Jaman! delicately tall
Above his sun-warm'd firs—
What thoughts to me his rocks recall!
What memories he stirs!

35

And who but thou must be, in truth,
Obermann! with me here?
Thou master of my wandering youth,
But left this many a year!

40

Yes, I forget the world's work wrought,
Its warfare waged with pain!
An eremite with thee, in thought
Once more I slip my chain

And to thy mountain-chalet come
And lie beside its door
And hear the wild bee's Alpine hum
And thy sad, tranquil lore

45

Again I feel its words inspire
Their mournful calm—serene,
Yet tinged with infinite desire
For all that *might* have been, 50

The harmony from which man swerved
Made his life's rule once more !
The universal order served !
Earth happier than before ! 55

While thus I mused, night gently ran
Down over hill and wood.
Then, still and sudden, Obermann
On the grass near me stood. 60

Those pensive features well I knew,
On my mind, years before,
Imaged so oft, imaged so true !
A shepherd's garb he wore,

A mountain-flower was in his hand, 65
A book was in his breast ;
Bent on my face, with gaze that scann'd
My soul, his eyes did rest.

“ And is it thou,” he cried, “ so long
Held by the world which we
Loved not, who turnest from the throng
Back to thy youth and me ? 70

“ And from thy world, with heart opprest,
Choolest thou *now* to turn ?—
Ah me, we anchorites knew it best !
Best can its course discern ! 75

“ Thou fledd'st me when the ungenial earth,
Thou soughtest, lay in gloom.
Return'st thou in her hour of birth,
Of hopes and hearts in bloom ? 80

“ Wellnigh two thousand years have brought
Their load, and gone away,
Since last on earth there lived and wrought
A world like ours to-day.

“ Like ours it look'd in outward air !
Its head was clear and true,
Sumptuous its clothing, rich its fare,
No pause its action knew ;

85

“ Stout was its arm, each pulse and bone
Seem'd puissant and alive—
But, ah, its heart, its heart was stone,
And so it could not thrive !

90

“ On that hard Pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell.
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell.

95

“ In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,
The Roman noble lay ;
He drove abroad, in furious guise,
Along the Appian way ;

100

“ He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,
And crown'd his hair with flowers—
No easier nor no quicker pass'd
The impracticable hours.

“ The brooding East with awe beheld
Her impious younger world ;
The Roman tempest swell'd and swell'd,
And on her head was hurl'd.

105

“ The East bowed low before the blast,
In patient, deep disdain.
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.

110

Fill'd earth and heaven, and caught away
My ravish'd spirit too !

" No cloister-floor of humid stone
Had been too cold for me ;
For me no Eastern desert lone
Had been too far to flee. 145

" No thoughts that to the world belong
Had stood against the wave
Of love which set so deep and strong
From Christ's then open grave. 150

" No lonely life had pass'd too slow
When I could hourly see
That wan, nail'd Form, with head droop'd low,
Upon the bitter tree ; 156

" Could see the Mother with the Child
Whose tender winning arts
Have to his little arms beguiled
So many wounded hearts ! 160

" And centuries came, and ran their course,
And unspent all that time
Still, still went forth that Child's dear force,
And still was at its prime.

" Aye, ages long endured his span 165
Of life, 'tis true received,
That gracious Child, that thorn-crown'd Man !
He lived while we believed.

" While we believed, on earth he went,
And open stood his grave. 170
Men call'd from chamber, church, and tent,
And Christ was by to save.

“ Now he is dead. Far hence he lies
In the lorn Syrian town,
And on his grave, with shining eyes,
The Syrian stars look down.

175

“ In vain men still, with hoping new,
Regard his death-place dumb,
And say the stone is not yet to,
And wait for words to come.

180

“ Ah, from that silent sacred land,
Of sun, and arid stone,
And crumbling wall, and sultry sand,
Comes now one word alone !

“ From David's lips this word did roll,
'Tis true and living yet :
*No man can save his brother's soul,
Nor pay his brother's debt.*

185

“ Alone, self-poised, henceforward man
Must labour ; must resign
His all too human creeds, and scan
Simply the way divine.

190

“ But slow that tide of common thought,
Which bathed our life, retired.
Slow, slow the old world wore to naught,
And pulse by pulse expired.

195

“ Its frame yet stood without a breach
When blood and warmth were fled ;
And still it spake its wonted speech—
But every word was dead.

200

“ And oh, we cried, that on this corse
Might fall a freshening storm !

Rive its dry bones, and with new force
A new-sprung world inform !

“ Down came the storm ! In ruin fell
The outworn world we knew.
It pass'd, that elemental swell
Again appear'd the blue. 205

“ The sun shone in the new-wash'd sky—
And what from heaven saw he ? 210
Blocks of the past, like icebergs high,
Float in a rolling sea.

“ Upon them ply the race of man
All they before endeavour'd ;
They come and go, they work and plan, 215
And know not they are sever'd.

“ Poor fragments of a broken world
Whereon we pitch our tent !
Why were ye too to death not hurl'd
When your world's day was spent ? 220

“ The glow of central fire is done
Which with its fusing flame
Knit all your parts, and kept you one ;—
But ye, ye are the same !

“ The past, its mask of union on, 225
Had ceased to live and thrive.
The past, its mask of union gone,
Say, is it more alive ?

“ Your creeds are dead, your rites are dead, 230
Your social order too.
Where tarries he, the power who said :
See, I make all things new ?

“ The millions suffer still, and grieve ;
And what can helpers heal
With old-world cures men half believe
For woes they wholly feel ? 235

“ And yet they have such need of joy !
And joy whose grounds are true !
And joy that should all hearts employ
As when the past was new ! 240

“ Ah, not the emotion of that past,
Its common hope, were vain !
A new such hope must dawn at last,
Or man must toss in pain.

“ But now the past is out of date, 245
The future not yet born—
And who can be *alone* elate,
While the world lies forlorn ?

“ Then to the wilderness I fled.
There among Alpine snows 250
And pastoral huts I hid my head,
And sought and found repose.

“ It was not yet the appointed hour.
Sad, patient, and resign'd,
I watch'd the crocus fade and flower, 255
I felt the sun and wind.

“ The day I lived in was not mine—
Man gets no second day.
In dreams I saw the future shine,
But ah, I could not stay ! 260

“ Action I had not, followers, fame.
I pass'd obscure, alone.

The after-world forgets my name,
Nor do I wish it known.

“ Gloom-wrapt within, I lived and died, 265
And knew my life was vain.
With fate I murmur not, nor chide ;
At Sèvres by the Seine

“ (If Paris that brief flight allow)
My humble tomb explore ; 270
It bears : *Eternity, be thou*
My refuge ! and no more

“ But thou, whom fellowship of mood
Did make from haunts of strife
Come to my mountain solitude 275
And learn my frustrate life ;

“ O thou, who, ere thy flying span
Was past of cheerful youth,
Didst seek the solitary man
And love his cheerless truth— 280

“ Despair not thou as I despaired,
Nor be cold gloom thy prison !
Forward the gracious hours have fared,
And see ! the sun is risen.

“ He melts the icebergs of the past, 285
A green, new earth appears.
Millions, whose life in ice lay fast,
Have thoughts, and smiles, and tears.

“ The world's great order dawns in sheen
After long darkness rude, 290
Divinelier imaged, clearer seen,
With happier zeal pursued.

“ With hope extinct and brow composed
 I mark’d the present die ;
 Its term of life was nearly closed, 295
 Yet it had more than I.

“ But thou, though to the world’s new hour
 Thou come with aspect marr’d,
 Shorn of the joy, the bloom, the power,
 Which best beseem its bard ; 300

“ Though more than half thy years be past,
 And spent thy youthful prime ;
 Though, round thy firmer manhood cast,
 Hang weeds of our sad time,

“ Whereof thy youth felt all the spell, 305
 And traversed all the shade—
 Though late, though dimm’d, though weak, ye
 tell
 Hope to a world new-made !

“ Help it to reach our deep desire,
 The dream which fill’d our brain, 310
 Fix’d in our soul a thirst like fire,
 Immedicable pain !

“ Which to the wilderness drove out
 Our life, to Alpine snow ;
 And palsied all our deed with doubt 315
 And all our word with woe—

“ What still of strength is left, employ,
 That end to help men gain :
One mighty wave of thought and joy
Lifting mankind amain !” 320

The vision ended ; I awoke
 As out of sleep, and no

Voice moved—only the torrent broke
The silence, far below.

Soft darkness on the turf did lie ;
Solemn, o'er hut and wood,
In the yet star-sown nightly sky,
The peak of Jaman stood. 325

Still in my soul the voice I heard
Of Obermann—away
I turn'd ; by some vague impulse stirr'd,
Along the rocks of Naye 330

And Sonchaud's piny flanks I gaze
And the blanch'd summit bare
Of Malatrait, to where in haze
The Valais opens fair, 335

And the domed Velan with his snows
Behind the upcrowding hills
Doth all the heavenly opening close
Which the Rhone's murmur fills— 340

And glorious there, without a sound,
Across the glimmering lake,
High in the Valais depth profound,
I saw the morning break.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

July 25, 1881

*(The Day of Burial in the Abbey of ARTHUR PENRHYN
STANLEY, Dean of Westminster)*

WHAT ! for a term so scant
Our shining visitant

Come streaming with the floods of glory in,
And carols float along the happy air,
As if the reign of joy did now begin. 40

Then all again is dark ;
And by the fisher's bark
The unknown passenger returning stands.
" O Saxon fisher ! thou hast had with thee
The fisher from the Lake of Galilee "— 45
So saith he, blessing him with outstretched hands ;

Then fades, but speaks the while :
" At dawn thou to King Sebert shall relate
How his St. Peter's Church in Thorney Isle
Peter, his friend, with light did consecrate." 50

Twelve hundred years and more
Along the holy floor
Pageants have pass'd, and tombs of mighty kings
Efface the humbler graves of Sebert's line,
And, as years sped, the minster-aisles divine 55
Grew used to the approach of Glory's wings.

Art came, and arms, and law,
And majesty, and sacred form and fear ;
Only that primal guest the fisher saw,
Light, only light, was slow to reappear. 60

The Saviour's happy light
Wherein at first was dight
His boon of life and immortality,
In desert ice of subtleties was spent
Or drown'd in mists of childish wonderment, 65
Fond fancies here, there false philosophy !

And harsh the temper grew
Of men with mind thus darken'd and astray ;
And scarce the boon of life could struggle through,
For want of light which should the boon convey. 70

Yet in this latter time
The promise of the prime

Seem'd to come true at last, O Abbey old !

It seem'd, a child of light did bring the dower
Foreshown thee in thy consecration-hour, 75
And in thy courts his shining freight unroll'd :

Bright wits, and instincts sure,
And goodness warm, and truth without alloy.
And temper sweet, and love of all things pure
And joy in light, and power to spread the joy. 80

And on that countenance bright
Shone oft so high a light,
That to my mind there came how, long ago,
Lay on the hearth, amid a fiery ring,
The charm'd babe of the Eleusinian king— 85
His nurse, the Mighty Mother, will'd it so ;
Warm in her breast, by day,
He slumber'd, and ambrosia balm'd the child ;
But all night long amid the flames he lay,
Upon the hearth, and play'd with them, and smiled 90

But once, at midnight deep,
His mother woke from sleep,
And saw her babe amidst the fire, and scream'd
A sigh the goddess gave, and with a frown
Pluck'd from the fire the child, and laid him down ;
Then raised her face, and glory round her stream'd. 96
The mourning-stole no more
Mantled her form, no more her head was bow'd ;
But raiment of celestial sheen she wore,
And beauty fill'd her, and she spake aloud :— 100

“ O ignorant race of man !
Achieve your good who can,
If your own hands the good begun undo ?
Had human hands not marr'd the work divine,
Immortal had I made this boy of mine ; 105
But now his head to death again is due.
And I have now no power

Unto this pious household to repay
Their kindness shown me in my wandering hour."
She spake and from the portal pass'd away. 110

The Boy his nurse forgot,
And bore a mortal lot.
Long since his name is heard on earth no more.
In some chance battle on Cithaeron-side
The nursling of the mighty mother died, 115
And went where all his fathers went before.
—On thee too, in thy day
Of childhood, Arthur! did some check have power,
That, radiant though thou wert, thou couldst but
stay,
Bringer of heavenly light, a human hour? 120

Therefore our happy guest
Knew care and knew unrest,
And weakness warn'd him, and he fear'd decline.
And in the grave he laid a cherished wife
And men ignoble harass'd him with strife, 125
And deadly airs his strength did undermine.
Then from his Abbey fades
The sound beloved of his victorious breath;
And light's fair nursling stupor first invades,
And next the crowning impotence of death. 130

But hush! This mournful strain,
Which would of death complain,
The oracle forbade, not ill-inspired,—
That Pair, whose head did plan, whose hands did
forge
The Temple in the pure Parnassian gorge, 135
Finish'd their work, and then a meed required
“Seven days,” the God replied,
“Live happy, then expect your perfect meed!”
Quiet in sleep, the seventh night, they died.
Death, death was judged the boon supreme indeed. 140

And truly he who here
 Hath run his bright career,
 And served men nobly, and acceptance found,
 And borne to light and right his witness high,
 What could he better wish than then to die, 145
 And wait the issue, sleeping underground?

Why should he pray to range
 Down the long age of truth that ripens slow;
 And break his heart with all the baffling change,
 And all the tedious tossing to and fro? 150

For this and that way swings
 The flux of mortal things,
 Though moving inly to one far-set goal.
 What had our Arthur gain'd to stop and see,
 After light's term a term of cecity, 155
 A Church once large and then grown strait in soul?
 To live and see arise,
 Alternating with wisdom's too short reign,
 Folly revived, re-furbish'd sophistries,
 And pullulating rites externe and vain? 160

Ay me! 'Tis deaf, that ear
 Which joy'd my voice to hear;
 Yet would I not disturb thee from thy tomb,
 Thus sleeping in thine Abbey's friendly shade.
 And the rough waves of life for ever laid! 165
 I would not break thy rest, nor change thy doom.
 Even as my father, thou—
 Even as that loved, that well-recorded friend—
 Hast thy commission done; ye both may now
 Wait for the leaven to work, the let to end. 170

And thou, O Abbey grey!
 Predestined to the ray
 By this dear guest over thy precinct shed—
 Fear not but that thy light once more shall burn,
 Once more thine immemorial gleam return. 175

Though sunk be now this bright, this gracious head !

Let but the light appear

And thy transfigured walls be touch'd with flame—

Our Arthur will again be present here,

Again from lip to lip will past his name.

NOTES

NOTES

SONNET (p. 11)

Eventually called *Quiet Work*.

This is the Wordsworthian view of Nature as a calm and beneficent power from whom man may learn wisdom. Contrast the sonnet *In Harmony with Nature* (p. 25).

Arnold made slight changes in the phrasing of this poem later, such as the substitution of "lasting fruit" for "still advance" (l. 6).

13. still means "always," as often in poetry.

MYCERINUS (p. 11)

The chief part of the story of Mycerinus (*Herodotus*, II, c. 129-133) is as follows: "An oracle reached him from the town of Buto, which said 'Six years only shalt thou live upon the earth, and in the seventh thou shalt end thy days.' Mycerinus, indignant, sent an angry message to the oracle, reproaching the god with his injustice. 'My father and uncle,' he said, 'though they shut up the temples, took no thought of the gods, and destroyed multitudes of men, nevertheless enjoyed a long life; I, who am pious, am to die so soon!' There came in reply a second message from the oracle: 'For this very reason is thy life brought so quickly to a close—thou hast not done as it behoved thee. Egypt was fated to suffer affliction one hundred and fifty years—the two kings who preceded thee upon the throne

understood this—thou hast not understood it.' Mycerinus, when this answer reached him, perceiving that his doom was fixed, had lamps prepared, which he lighted every day at eventime, and feasted and enjoyed himself unceasingly both day and night, moving about in the marsh country and the woods, and visiting all the places that he heard were agreeable sojourns. His wish was to prove the oracle false, by turning the nights into days, and so living twelve years in the space of six" (Rawlinson's translation).

Arnold has given a more serious turn to this very Greek piece of cleverness.

The King's Egyptian name is Menkaura, and a portrait of him forms the frontispiece to Hall's *The Ancient History of the Near East*. His coffin and perhaps his mummy is in the first Egyptian room at the British Museum.

It is a dramatic monologue, a situation such as Browning loved, with a tailpiece which gives an opportunity for Arnold to exercise his descriptive powers; which he does to some purpose in such lines as 98-9:

"While the deep-burnish'd
foliage overhead
Splinter'd the silver arrows
of the moon."

Notice the "dying fall" of the last lines and cf. the end of Tennyson's *Come Down, O Maid*. The story and its treatment should be compared with Wordsworth's *Laodamia*.

25-30. I.e. man's justice and striving to avoid the allurements of pleasure (ll. 19-24) is vain if the end of the righteous is no better than that of the unrighteous.

46. Notice the alliteration in this line. Cf. l. 48 and the last two lines of the poem. The device is effective if not employed as constantly as it is by Swinburne.

54. The Epicurean view that if there are gods they do not care for the affairs of men finds its finest expression in Lucretius. Tennyson echoes it well in his poem *Lucretius*.

109-111. Here we have Stoicism and the typical "note" of Arnold.

TO A FRIEND (p. 15)

Arnold has written perhaps the best literary criticism in verse of any poet, and it forms no inconsiderable part of his output. Cf. *Memorial Verses* (p. 57), *Stanzas in Memory of the Author of 'Obermann,' Heine's Grave*, and the *Epilogue to Lessing's Laocoön*. Such poetry can never rank with the very highest, because it is, so to speak, two removes from life; but its existence is abundantly justified in the eyes of all those for whom, as for Arnold himself, literature and thoughts about literature are one of the important things in life. For "An interest in literature is, at bottom, an interest in life."

The only flaw in the sonnet is the cacophony of *ask'st* (l. 1), at any rate when read aloud. A similar blemish, this time in the last line, somewhat mars the fine sonnet *East London* (p. 142).

2. the old man : Homer.

3. **The Wide Prospect** : a literal translation of "Europe," which is a Greek word *Εὐρώπη*.

6. **That halting slave** : the lame freedman Epictetus, a teacher of Stoicism expelled from Rome, by Domitian. See *The Golden Sayings of Epictetus*, translated by H. Crossley (a volume in Macmillan's "Golden Treasury Series").

7. **Arrian** : pupil and friend of Epictetus, whose teaching he wrote down, was a Greek by birth but became a distinguished Roman civil servant in the early second century A.D. He also wrote a history of Alexander the Great still extant.

Vespasian restored order to the Roman Empire after the civil wars of A.D. 69-70. His second son, Domitian (emperor, A.D. 81-96), expelled the philosophers from Rome both as critics of his lust and cruelty, and also as being advocates of republicanism.

9-14. These lines are a tribute to Sophocles, one of the three great Attic tragedians of the fifth century B.C. He was a special favourite with Arnold, and is the best example of the pure classic style (cf. especially the lecture on Sophocles in Mackail's *Lectures on Greek Poetry*). L. 12 is often and justly quoted as the distinguishing feature of most Greek literature. The non-classical reader should consult such a book as Livingstone's *The Greek Genius and its Meaning to Us* or Butcher's *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*.

14. The *Œdipus Tyrannus* and *Œdipus Coloneus* are two plays of Sophocles.

THE STRAYED REVELLER (p. 16)

"The Strayed Reveller" is "The Youth," one of Bacchus' revel rout. He drinks Circe's magic cup and relates a series of visions. In the *Odyssey* (Book X) Circe kept Odysseus (Ulysses) with her for a year, having changed his companions into swine.

In a selection which claims to give the *best* of Arnold's verse it is right to state that this poem is included at the request of others contrary to the editor's own judgment. It has the merit of giving clear and vivid pictures, but the visions have not that inevitability which Arnold himself led us to require in poetry, while in many parts rhythm is either absent or very faulty (e.g. ll. 29-53, 83-9).

38. **Iacchus**: a variant for Bacchus in certain ritual.
fane: temple.

78. **Ampelus**: the Greek word for a "vine" personified.

135. **Tiresias**: blind prophet of Thebes; cf. *Youth of Nature*, l. 45. For his story see *Class. Dict.*

145. **Pelion**: in Thessaly, where the Centaurs, half-men half-horses, were placed.

161. **ring**: surround.

163. **Stepp**: steppe.

183. **Chorasmian stream**: the Oxus; cf. *Sohrab and Rustum*, ll. 875 to end.

206. **The Happy Islands**: the isles of the blest, the abode of brave warriors after death.

228. Theseus and the Lapithae fought against the Centaurs.

231. **Alcmena's dreadful son**: Heracles (Hercules).

232-4. The artist must feel and experience for himself before he can create what will cause others to feel or experience any emotion. Hence the seer must suffer what the Indian, the Merchant, or the Heroes do.

255. Cf. l. 206.

259. **Argo**: the ship of Jason when he went to seek the Golden Fleece.

261. **Silenus**: follower of Bacchus.

SHAKESPEARE (p. 25)

Perhaps all that need be said of this sonnet is that it is worthy of its subject. It is perhaps the best in style of Arnold's early poems. We see his "note" creeping in already in the reference to "the foil'd searching of mortality." Among other poetic tributes to Shakespeare the reader should compare Ben Jonson's, prefixed to the first folio edition of Shakespeare's plays (where occurs the well-known line:

"He was not of an age, but for all time!"),

Milton's *On Shakespeare*, 1630, and Robert Bridge's *Ode on the Tercentenary Commemoration of Shakespeare*, 1916 (to be found in Caldwell's *The Golden Book of Modern English Poetry*).

9-14. Such records as we have of Shakespeare's life (which are not quite so shadowy as the Baconians suggest!) concern his outward life—the buying of a house or the appearance as a witness in a lawsuit. His real life—the life of his soul—was hid from his contemporaries; but we can know from his greatest tragedies that he had plumbed the depths of human misery,

and his voice for us is in
King Lear or *Othello* or
Hamlet.

TO AN INDEPENDENT PREACHER (p. 25)

The preacher had urged his audience to live according to Nature, as Rousseau had before him. This cant phrase has been more than ever abused since the scientific movement of the mid-nineteenth century. It all depends whether Nature is made to include *human* nature, with all those ideas and ideals that make it different from animal nature. The ethical and political system built up by such writers as Herbert Spencer, arguing from the lower to the higher, on a "natural" basis is now abandoned, even by most scientists.

The best commentary on this sonnet is T. H. Huxley's *Romanes Lecture* for 1893, *Evolution and Ethics*.

12. What man has and Nature has not is explained in the poem called *Morality* (p. 75).

TO A REPUBLICAN FRIEND, 1848 (p. 26)

The Friend is probably Clough, for whom see *Thyrsis*. 1848 was the "year of revolutions" on the Continent, beginning with the overthrow of the monarchy in France. Grammatically this sonnet is one long sentence, the protasis of the condition being summed up in l. 13 and the apodosis forming the last line.

In these two sonnets Arnold says that character and not worldly position is what really matters; and that, though

sympathizing with the misery of the poor, he does not believe it can be cured all at once by a political revolution. Ultimately it can only be cured by the improvement of individual character.

One of the best things in *Unpublished Letters of Matthew Arnold* by his grandson, A. Whitridge (1924), is this: "I do not think any fruitful revolution can come in my time; and meanwhile, thank God, there are many honest people on earth, and the month of May comes every year."

9-10. Cf. these words of Arnold in a letter of 1848: "The hour of hereditary peerage and eldest sonship and immense properties has struck."

(THE SAME) CONTINUED (p. 26)

2-3. Tennyson with less restraint spoke of "the red-fool fury of the Seine."

4. This piece of criticism may be true (Gothic architecture is perhaps the only art in which France could claim supremacy), but is irrelevant here.

TO MY FRIENDS (p. 27)

In a note in the *Collected Edition* of his poems Arnold connects this poem with the *Switzerland* series. No one knows who Marguerite was. The description of her in ll. 25-54 seems almost too glowing for an imaginary figure. On the other hand, Arnold's regular life and early marriage leave little room for this yearly meeting in Switzerland, and by the time he wrote *The Terrace at Berne* he was fairly indifferent to her fate. Naturally enough,

perhaps, there is no reference to the subject in *The Letters*; and the enquiry, though interesting, is really irrelevant to his poetry.

61-2. I.e. You, being yourselves the servants of Time, are glad to see me also subject to him, in forgetting.

THE VOICE (p. 29)

The point of the similes is not told us till ll. 23-30; "The Voice" forms a contrast to his present mood of sadness, as the bright beams of the calm moon to the wild waves, etc. The poem "records an hour when the ancient cry of youth to fulfil all joy came to him out of a forgotten time, came to him when his heart had been long sobered by dreary and doubtful thought, by heavy circumstance" (Stopford Brooke).

STAGIRIUS (p. 30)

"Stagirus was a young monk to whom St. Chrysostom addressed three books, and of whom those books give an account" (Arnold). Chrysostom was the most famous of the Greek Fathers and flourished c. A.D. 400. In this poem Arnold puts into the mouth of the young monk his own obstinate questionings and yearnings. This side of Arnold is best seen in *Matthew Arnold's Note Books* (published in 1902 by his daughter), in which he copied down sentences from the books he was reading. After the poems this is the most important evidence for getting at the inner spirit of the man, though it seems to have been much neglected hitherto.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

(p. 32)

This is the best of Arnold's early poems; perhaps the most perfect thing, within its limits, that he ever wrote. Here for once he seems to sing; and of this poem, at any rate, no one could ask whether the thought might not have been equally well expressed in prose. Notice especially the wonderful powers of description shown briefly in ll. 25-6 and 116-9, and more at length in ll. 32-45 and 68-76. Pathos is even here the prevailing note, in Arnold's treatment of the Merman who has lost his human bride: "*Alone dwell for ever the Kings of the sea.*"

"The Forsaken Merman is conscious of the existence of a rivalry in the claims of religious feelings into which he cannot enter, and yet is full of painful yearning" (Hutton).

The folklore of the Northern nations has many tales of the relations between mortals and merman or mermaids. This particular version occurs in Danish legend.

1. The Merman speaks throughout the poem.
13. Arnold's favourite name again (cf. the *Switzerland* series) here of very effective sound.
42. *mail* is chain or ring armour; so it describes the scales of fish here.
96. This was later altered to "Till the spindle drops from her hand", because the spindle belongs to the spinning wheel (l. 92), the shuttle to weaving.
110. "The triumph of the piece is in one of those metrical *coups* which give the triumph of all the greatest

poetry, in the sudden change from the slower movements of the earlier stanzas or strophes to the quicker sweep of the famous conclusion" (Saintsbury).

For a different but equally effective change of metre cf. the end of Part I of *Tristram and Iseult*.

IN UTRUMQUE PARATUS (p. 36)

I have included this poem chiefly for the sake of the third verse. The title means "Prepared for either (eventuality)"; the first alternative being well given in the first three verses and the second, rather weakly, in the last three. A rough paraphrase must be attempted: "If the world is the creation of a Divine Intelligence then we must endeavour to retrace our path to it, and the way will be hard and lonely (so ll. 15-21 is a beautiful metaphor from Alpine scenery for this ascent). If, on the other hand, the Materialists are right and man's idealism has nothing to correspond to it in Nature, remember that and 'be not too proud.'" The second verse may remind the Platonist of the ascent to the Knowledge of the Ideas (Cf. *Republic*, VI-VII).

RESIGNATION (p. 38)

This poem does not seem to have been included in any previous selection from the poet's work. Yet it is the longest poem in this first volume of 1849, the best perhaps except *The Forsaken Merman*, and the most characteristic of its author. For to this mood had the struggles of his mind now brought him. It contains much of that charming

description of nature to which Arnold betook himself when the problems of life pressed too heavily on the intellect (esp. ll. 40-85), and one of the best accounts of the poetic attitude to life, expressed in language of beauty and dignity (ll. 144-198).

Swinburne accounts *Resignation* "the final flower" of Arnold's Wordsworthianism. The poem is rather too long and the sequence of thought none too clear. The general theme is Resignation, as shown, e.g., by the Gipsies (ll. 108-143) and the Poet (ll. 144-212) in their attitude to life. In contrast with this is the life of strenuous effort illustrated by ll. 1-39. Space does not admit of frequent paraphrase, but repeated reading will make most things clear to mature persons.

5. I.e. Crusaders.

38. I.e. They do not ask that Time should stand still for them to fulfil their ambitions.

40. This walk was probably taken in 1833, when Matthew Arnold was eleven years old. The Arnolds were then staying at Allan Bank, Grasmere, while Fox How was being built. The point of departure (l. 44) was the inn at Wythburn (at the south end of Thirlmere), where Canon Rawnsley set up a slab on the bank above the coach road quoting these lines. The "leader" is Dr. Arnold (see *Rugby Chapel*) and the walk was over Armboth Fell to Watendlath (l. 74) and then northward to Keswick (l. 77). Thence the party walked to Cockermouth by road (ll. 80-1) and probably drove to Whitehaven, the nearest point on the coast (l. 85). Watendlath is still as it was nearly a

century ago, and the walk to it from Borrowdale one of the most glorious in Britain.

147. It may perhaps be said that Arnold's weakness is that he too often scans his own course rather than the universal course of man. The greatest poets, Homer or Shakespeare, are generally the most impersonal.

160-1. The attitude of the artist, painter as much as

poet, in a nutshell. See an etching of Orpen's called "The Draughtsman and His Model" (1910).

181. **clown** : i.e. countryman.

197. **Chance** : i.e. the accidents of life.

203-4. Fausta is supposed to object that the Gipsies do not feel our ambitions, while the Poet can console himself with the spectacle of all time and all existence (as Plato said of the philosopher).

This poem ends our selection from the 1849 volume entitled *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems*. The next volume *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems* appeared in 1852.

From EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

CADMUS AND HARMONIA

(p. 45)

Arnold himself reprinted this and the following song of Callicles under the titles given during the years before *Empedocles on Etna* reappeared in 1867 at the request of Browning. The first passage is one of Arnold's finest pieces of descriptive verse.

Cadmus was the legendary founder of Thebes and Harmonia was his wife. For further details on this and other classical names in Arnold's poetry reference should be made to a classical dictionary. [The cheapest and best is Smith's *Smaller Classical Dictionary*, revised by E. H. Blakeney in Everyman's Library, and every reader of English poetry would do well to possess it.]

14. Not the Egyptian but the Theban Sphinx; see *Class. Dict.*

24-25. See Pindar's Third Pythian Ode, a favourite with Arnold, ll. 88, etc.

APOLLO MUSAGETES

(p. 47)

Apollo, leader of the Muses, a Greek epithet of Apollo. Empedocles, the fourth century B.C. Sicilian philosopher, has just thrown himself into Etna in disgust with life. This song concludes the drama, and its music is in strong contrast to the dull, rhymeless metres that have preceded.

7. **Helicon** : the mountain of Apollo and the Muses in Bœotia. **Thisbe** is near by.

21-8. Perhaps the most delightful verses in this charming song.

30. **the Nine Muses**.

47. **rest** is a noun ; i.e. quiet.

50. **palm** : the reward of strife.

TOO LATE (p. 48)

This short poem has most of the qualities of an epigram from the Greek Anthology. The whole pathos of an oft-recurring situation is concen-

trated in the restrained words of the second verse. In the old story of Tristram and Iseult, the former meets the latter when she is already the wife of the King of Cornwall. Swinburne exploits the situation of the lovers' escape in page after page of musical verse. Arnold however considered that poetry was a criticism of life, and was not one of those inconsistent people who glorify in literature what they condemn in life. In his *Tristram and Iseult* he chooses for treatment the end of their lives.

ON THE RHINE (p. 49)

This poem, with its predecessor and successor and two more, was later grouped under the title *Faded Leaves*. The ends of the third and fourth verses are especially happy.

LONGING (p. 50)

The extreme simplicity of this beautiful poem in thought and style (notice the predominance of monosyllables, as in *Too Late*) reminds one of Wordsworth.

9. in sooth : in reality.

THE LAKE (p. 50)

This and the next three poems were finally formed with others into a series called *Switzerland*. "Marguerite" occurs also in *A Dream* (p. 109), and cf. *To my Friends* (p. 27)

PARTING (p. 51)

This poem is at least as noteworthy for its lovely glimpses of Alpine scenery as for its references to Marguerite. The two subjects are marked by different metres. "Like Goethe, when he fled from his slavery to Lili, the poet calls on the mountains to receive him and

release him from the storm of love" (S. Brooke).

45. Does **waning** refer to the steadily decreasing amount of hill not covered by snow?

ABSENCE (p. 54)

15-16. The conflict of reason (the light) with the tumult of the emotions must be familiar to most thinking men as to Arnold.

17-20. For the turn back on his former renunciation of the passion, cf. Drayton's superb sonnet "Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part" (included in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* and *The Oxford Book of English Verse*), with its concluding couplet:

"Now, at the last, when
all have given him over,
From death to life thou
mightest him yet re-
cover."

ISOLATION (p. 54)

Professor Saintsbury considers this piece to be "the crowning point perhaps of his poetry. . . . The image—the islands in the sea—is capitally projected in the first stanza; it is exquisitely amplified in the second; the moral comes with due force in the third; and the whole winds up with one of the great poetic phrases of the century—one of the 'jewels five [literally five!] words long' of English verse—a phrase complete and final, with epithets in unerring cumulation."

24. "This last line is inexhaustible in beauty and force. Without any false emphasis or prolix dwelling on the matter, it shadows out to you the plunging deep-sea lead and the eerie cry of 'no sound

ings,' recalls that saltiness of the sea which takes from water every refreshing association, every quality that helps to slake thirst or supply sap, and then concentrates all their dividing attributes, which strike a sort of lonely terror into the soul, into the one word 'estranging' " (Hutton).

YOUTH'S AGITATIONS

(p. 55)

The last line of *ISOLATION* had about it the ring of Shakespeare; and in this sonnet Arnold has caught the manner, if not the matter, of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

5. **joy**: rejoice that.

LINES WRITTEN BY A DEATH-BED (p. 56)

Ll. 1-16 of this poem were eventually inserted in *Tristram and Iseult* after l. 126 of Part II to describe Iseult of Ireland. The remainder was then called *Youth and Calm*. Cf. *Youth's Agitations*. The most adequate answer in poetry is Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. Arnold gives a sort of reply in *The Last Word* (p. 154)

19. **dismarble**: destroy the calm of.

MEMORIAL VERSES (p. 57)

Written after Wordsworth's death. This poem contains a most felicitous criticism of Wordsworth and his position in English poetry (esp. ll. 45-57). Cf. *Introd. note on To a Friend*.

Arnold as a boy and young man knew Wordsworth, whose home at Rydal was within a short distance of Fox How. In January, 1848, for example,

Matthew Arnold's mother writes to his brother Tom:

"Matt has been very much pleased, I think, by what he has seen of dear old Wordsworth since he has been at home, and certainly he manages to draw him out very well. The old man was here yesterday, and as he sat on the stool in the corner beside the fire, which you know so well, he talked of various subjects of interest, of Italian poetry, of Coleridge, etc., etc.; and he looked and spoke with more vigour than he has often done lately" (Mrs. H. Ward's *A Writer's Recollections*, p. 77).

Wordsworth's poetry had more influence over Arnold than any other English poet had. Cf. *Introduction*. But for the inadequacy of Arnold's view of W. see Bradley's *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (p. 127).

1-2. Goethe died in 1832, and Byron in 1824 while helping the Greeks in their struggle for independence.

5. It is to be hoped Arnold did not intend "tomb" to rhyme with "dumb."

23-4. The French Revolution and Napoleon.

29-33. A good instance of detailed classic influence. These lines are a paraphrase of what Virgil says in *Georgic II*, 490-2, probably with reference to the predecessor to whom he owed so much—Lucretius:

"Felix qui potuit rerum
cognoscere causas,
Atque metus omnes et
inexorabile fatum
Subiecit pedibus strepitum-
que Acherontis avari."

38. Orpheus in Greek mythology went down to Hades to

recover his wife Eurydice. The story is finely told in Virgil, *Georgic IV*, 453-527. Cf. *Thyrsis* l. 90: "And flute his friend, like Orpheus, from the dead."

64-5. Browning in such a poem as *Prospice* would satisfy this requirement. Arnold is however, as usual, unduly pessimistic about his own age. He himself besides "strengthening us to bear" has in poems like *Thyrsis* not a little of Wordsworth's "healing power."

72. Wordsworth lies in the peaceful churchyard of Grasmere, at the bottom of which flows the Rotha. (It has been well remarked that with the substitution of "Isis" for "Rotha" the lines would apply well to their writer.)

SELF-DEPENDENCE (p. 59)

A very typical poem. Cf. *A Summer Night* (esp. the close), *Quiet Work* (the "Sonnet" of p. 11), and *Lines written in Kensington Gardens*. The conclusion expresses just the Stoic philosophy, which at greater length is put in the mouth of Empedocles, e.g.:

"Once read thy own breast right,
And thou hast done with fears.
Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
Sink in thyself: there ask
what ails thee, at that shrine."

A SUMMER NIGHT (p. 60)

Perhaps the best poem we have come to since *The Forsaken Merman*. "There is a cheerful doctrine of mystical optimism which will have it

that a sufficiently intense devotion to any ideal never fails of at least one moment of consummate realization and enjoyment. Such a moment was granted to Matthew Arnold when he wrote *A Summer Night*. Whether that rather vague life-philosophy of his, that erection of a melancholy agnosticism *plus* asceticism into a creed, was anything more than a not ungraceful or undignified will-worship of Pride, we need not here argue out. But we have seen how faithfully the note of it rings through the verse of these years. And here it rings out not only faithfully, but almost triumphantly. The lips are touched at last: the eyes are thoroughly opened to see what the lips shall speak: the brain almost unconsciously frames and fills the adequate and inevitable scheme. And, as always at these right poetic moments, the minor infelicities follow the major. The false rhymes are nowhere; the imperfect phrases, the little sham simplicities or pedantries, hide themselves; and the poet is free, from the splendid opening landscape through the meditative exposition and the fine picture of the shipwreck, to the magnificent final invocation of the "Clearness divine" (Saintsbury). I have quoted this passage at length partly that the reader may infer by contrast what faults the severest critic may find with some of Arnold's verse. It is, however, more profitable as a rule to try and appreciate what a poet gives us and when we are dissatisfied to hold our peace.

74-5. The **madman** is the man "by passion quite possess'd" whose life is pictured ll. 51-73. The **slave** is he

who is "benumb'd by the world's sway" and neglects the spirit in meaningless task-work, or the pursuit of money for its own sake, ll. 37-50.

76-92. "After depicting the exhausting duties assigned by the world to the world's labourers and the disastrous wreck which falls upon those who break away from the world's fetters, he concludes in a strain somewhat more explicit than usual by affirming that in the great world of Nature there is something which, though it cannot indeed satisfy the heart, still can teach us fortitude and instil into the soul a few drops of stoic grandeur" (Hutton).

For Arnold's insistence on the exemplary aspects of Nature cf. *Self-Dependence* and opening *Sonnet*.

THE BURIED LIFE (p. 63)

There is more thought than song in this poem till we come near the close, but it is of great importance for the understanding of Arnold's mind. Anyone to whom that appeals should pursue the poet's own *Buried Life*, in fact his religion, in the *Note Books* previously mentioned.

76, etc. Cf. concluding paragraph of *Dover Beach*.

A FAREWELL (p. 66)

This finally appeared in the *Switzerland* group. Cf. note to *The Lake*.

33-6. Have the qualities which make the "successful man" ever been better summarized?

81. **boon**: kindly, pleasant; again used as adjective (*L. bonus*) in *Thyrsis*: "To a boon southern country he is fled."

LINES WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS (p. 69)

One of the most Wordsworthian of Arnold's poems. Cf. *Tintern Abbey* with l. 36 to end of this piece.

17-20. Arnold was a keen fisherman; see the *Letters*, *passim*.

28. **keeps**: remains.

REVOLUTIONS (p. 70)

5-6. Man making a word with the letters is, of course, a metaphor for successive achievements of the human spirit. "'Greece' may be taken to represent the highest development of plastic art and of literary form, 'Rome' that of law and government, 'England' of political freedom firmly based, 'France' of universal ideas of equality and fraternity" (G. C. Macaulay).

THE YOUTH OF NATURE (p. 71)

Cf. *Memorial Verses*. Here Arnold, while once more mourning the death of Wordsworth and appreciating his poetic gifts, insists that Nature is always young and fresh, and there is always more left to see than any seer can reveal to us. The metre is the unrhymed dactyls or anapæsts of which Arnold is so fond, here handled with considerable charm.

2. **the lake**: Rydal or Grasmere.

8. **Rydal Fell**: the spur of

Fairfield descending towards Rydal Water.

15. **The Pillar** Rock on the side of the Pillar Mountain (c. 2,900 ft.) in Ennerdale figures in Wordsworth's poem *The Brothers*. It is a superb precipice of rock and provides some of the most difficult courses for rock-climbers.

18. **The Evening Star** was the name of Michael's cottage above Grasmere, because it was widely seen. For this read Wordsworth's poem called *Michael*. [Both this and *The Brothers* and *Ruth* may be found in Arnold's own selection from Wordsworth, with introduction, in Macmillan's "Golden Treasury Series," which may be strongly recommended to those who do not know their way well about Wordsworth's collected works.]

24. **Ruth** (see Wordsworth's poem), deprived of her lover, wandered about the **Quantock** hills in Somerset.

35. Wordsworth died in the time of Radical triumph, having long ceased to be one himself; but he had scarcely more affinities with the old order.

36. **Tilphusa, Copais, Helicon** are all in Bæotia. For further information, if desired, on them and on Tiresias (the *Theban seer* of l. 34) see *Class Dict.* and *Atlas*.

56-8. Arnold's usual pessimism, as a young man, about his own day; cf. *Memorial Verses*, ll. 58-70.

75-7. rearrange for sense: "They are here," I heard the murmur of Nature reply, as men heard the voice of the Mighty Mother in Mysian

Ida or Crete. The **Mighty Mother** is Cybele, the Asiatic mother of the gods.

90. **I**: Nature.

102. **of himself**, and therefore still less of Nature.

This is followed by a companion piece *The Youth of Man*, which I have not judged quite worthy of this selection.

MORALITY (p. 75)

Cf. *To An Independent Preacher*, with note thereto. Morality is that which man has and nature has not, that is, his ideals and strivings towards their fulfilment. The metre and style are worthy of the thought in this excellent poem. Wordsworth's *Ode To Duty* should be read and compared throughout.

11-12. Arnold may have remembered, consciously or unconsciously, one of the best of his friend Clough's poems, "Say not the struggle naught availeth," especially the verse:

"And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes,
comes in the light;
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright!"

31. **gauge**: measure, limit.
manacles: fetters.

35. I.e. Morality is of divine origin, not merely "natural."

PROGRESS (p. 76)

This poem insists on the most important truth that in the zeal for reform the solid gains of the past must not be rashly jettisoned. To apply the thought to politics, instead of religion as here, one might say

that no politician can risk appealing to motives of cupidity or hatred, seeing how hard is the struggle from barbarism to civilization, from distrust and hatred to love and trust in one's fellow-men.

Cf. the thought in the sonnets *To a Republican Friend* with ll. 14-16 here. This poem is printed in its revised form of 1867, which omitted a verse after l. 40 to the improvement of the poem.

41. **can**: i.e. can do, as elsewhere occasionally, and in Latin.

THE FUTURE (p. 78)

One of the first poems in which Arnold strikes at all an optimistic note. He placed it very fitly at the close of his own selection from his poems. Once again we have the irregular and unrhymed dactyls and spondees, but not unsuccessful. The lovely closing paragraph reminds us of the close of *Sohrab and Rustum*. At its second and

third appearance the poem was preceded by this couplet:

"For Nature hath long
kept this inn, the Earth,
And many a guest hath she
therein received."

17-18. What, in prosaic language, is called the influence of environment. The different geographical features of, e.g., Greece and Egypt had the largest hand in determining their political histories.

25. **wots of**: knows, understands.

36. **Rebekah**: *Genesis xxtv.*

57. **shot**: variegated; i.e. "confused" and "changing." This use of the word, which has escaped the great Oxford English Dictionary, must come from "shot silk," which shows different colours, but is unexpected in a context like this. (The editor or printer of the "Everyman" edition puts "short"!).

71. **Haply**: perhaps.

This ends our selection from the volume of 1852.

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

p. 81)

"The young Sohrab was the fruit of one of Rustum's early amours. He had left his mother, and sought fame under the banners of Afrasiab, whose armies he commanded, and soon obtained a renown beyond that of all contemporary heroes but his father. He had carried death and dismay into the ranks of the Persians, and had terrified the boldest warriors of that country, before Rustum encountered him, which at last that hero resolved to do, under a feigned name. They met three times. The first time they parted by mutual consent,

though Sohrab had the advantage; the second, the youth obtained a victory, but granted life to his unknown father; the third was fatal to Sohrab, who, when writhing in the pangs of death, warned his conqueror to shun the vengeance that is inspired by parental woes, and bade him dread the rage of the mighty Rustum, who must soon learn that he had slain his son Sohrab. These words, we are told, were as death to the aged hero; and when he recovered from a trance, he called in despair for proofs of what Sohrab had said. The afflicted and dying youth tore open his mail, and showed his father a seal which his mother

had placed on his arm when she discovered to him the secret of his birth, and bade him seek his father. The sight of his own signet rendered Rustum quite frantic; he cursed himself, attempting to put an end to his existence, and was only prevented by the efforts of his expiring son. After Sohrab's death, he burnt his tents and all his goods, and carried the corpse to Seistan, where it was interred; the army of Turan was, agreeably to the last request of Sohrab, permitted to cross the Oxus unmolested. . . . To reconcile us to the improbability of this tale, we are informed that Rustum could have no idea his son was in existence. The mother of Sohrab had written to him her child was a daughter, fearing to lose her darling infant if she revealed the truth; and Rustum, as before stated, fought under a feigned name, an usage not uncommon in the chivalrous combats of those days."—SIR JOHN MALCOLM'S *History of Persia*. (Quoted by Arnold.)

This and the following poems first appeared in 1853. With them appeared a Preface, Arnold's first utterance in prose, "The most important critical document issued in England for something like a generation, and which, as prefixed by a poet to his poetry, admits no competitors in English, except some work of Dryden's and some of Wordsworth's" (Saintsbury). Space will not allow of its being reprinted here, but the student will find it in the "Everyman," "Temple," "World's Classics" or "Oxford" editions of Arnold's poems. A writer of the time had advocated contemporary affairs as the fit subject of poetry. Arnold replies that poetry deals with the primary affections, which

are the same in all ages, and that old stories are at least as good material for the poet as new ones; "His business is with their inward man, with their feelings and behaviour in certain tragic situations which engage their passions as men; these have in them nothing local and casual; they are as accessible to the modern poet as to a contemporary."

Sohrab and Rustum is an immediate exemplification of these views. The Preface pleaded for unity and consistency of style in preference to brilliant phrases. In this poem no digressions are allowed, only the adornment of description and elaborate simile; the result is as fine a narrative poem as the Victorian age produced, and stands with *The Scholar Gipsy* and *The Forsaken Merman* in the front rank of Arnold's poetry. Arnold wrote to his mother in May, 1853: "All my spare time has been spent on a poem which I have just finished and which I think by far the best thing I have yet done, and that it will be generally liked, though one never can be sure of this. I have had the greatest pleasure in composing it—a rare thing with me, and, as I think, a good test of the pleasure what you write is likely to afford to others; but then the story is a very noble and excellent one."

The story is a Persian one, Rustum being their national hero in the long struggle against Tartary (cf. our Arthurian cycle), and occurs in the epic of Firdawsi, a Persian poet of A.D. c. 1000. The events referred to occurred, in so far as they are true at all, about 600 B.C. For an analysis of the Persian poet's account see Trent and Brewster's *Sohrab and Rustum* (pub. by Ginn),

pp. xvi-xx; but as Arnold definitely states he had not been able to see the French translation of Firdawsi, but only Sainte Beuve's review of it, the subject need not be pursued.

Although the story is Persian and Arnold has taken some care to preserve local colour, the situation is thoroughly Homeric, and it is classical influences that have contributed most to Arnold's poem. The long similes are in the Homeric manner copied to some extent by other epic poets, e.g. Virgil and Milton (for a fuller treatment of this point see *The Influence of the Classics on the Poetry of Matthew Arnold*, pp. 12-14); but all through there is present "a sense of tears in mortal things" which is rather Virgilian than Homeric. Arnold has been blamed by some critics for delaying the action by his frequent similes; personally, however, I feel their intrinsic beauty to be a sufficient excuse. The poem is sad, but not depressing, because heroic. A noble and restrained pathos is its pre-eminent quality.

The blank verse is always excellent and sometimes grand, as in the closing paragraph. The poem bears well the test of reading aloud.

It may be compared in its style and in the reflection of classical influence with *Morte d'Arthur*, about the best of Tennyson's blank verse. *Sohrab and Rustum* is the simpler and perhaps the more truly classical of the two; but both are in the forefront of the narrative poetry of the age.

It is "An Episode," because it only describes one of Rustum's adventures, and is not on epic scale.

Sohrab and Rustum has been far oftener edited than other

poems of its author. I have not therefore attempted to go once more over the same ground, especially as to the geography. Most of the places can be found in an atlas, and useful notes are available in the edition of Trent and Brewster previously referred to, or in George and Leigh's *Selected Poems of Matthew Arnold* (Oxford). Nor has space allowed the full citation of the Homeric parallels. For smaller Homeric touches see, e.g., ll. 29, 60, 94-103, 150-5, 341.

1. **And** gives a sense of continuity with what has preceded; this is "an Episode."

12, 16. The repetition of a word or phrase is one of Arnold's favourite tricks of style, particularly in this poem; cf. ll. 237-41, 322-4, 394-5, 723-4, 798-806, etc. This, together with the effective use of geographical names chosen for their sounds, is a link with *Paradise Lost*, and in fact the regular epic tradition.

111, etc. Cf. *Iliad* II, 459-63.

125. I.e. drink only milk and water.

acrid: bitter.

127. I.e. were less to be relied upon for assistance.

166. "Colonel Yule . . . told me he had been talking with some Indians about my 'sugared mulberries' in crossing the Hindu Koosh; the common thing to keep in your mouth is a garlic plant. But he had been sure, he said, that I had authority for the mulberries, I was so faithful about Asiatic things; and so I had. Burnes says that the pedlars eat them in crossing the highest passes, but it was curious to find

my poetry taken so seriously "
(*Letters*, Vol. II, p. 146).

178-9. Cf. Achilles in *Iliad*.

198-9. The detail is in Homeric style.

223. **Kai Khosroo**: Cyrus the Great, but the incident really took place earlier.

230. Cf. ll. 607-11 for the story.

277. **Dight**: decked out, clad (archaic). Again in *Westminster Abbey*, l. 62.

390-7. Very Shakespearean lines. Cf. *Julius Cæsar* IV, iii, 218: "There is a tide in the affairs of men," etc.

402. Onomatopœic; the sound echoes the sense in the first four words. Cf. Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur*, *passim*, above all other works.

414. **wrack**: wreck.

480. Cf. *Iliad* XVII, 365-75.

516. The ἀναγνώρισις or "recognition" is excellently managed so as to cause the final tragedy. This is due to Arnold and is not in the Persian story.

861. **Jemshid**: a more or less mythical King of Persia. Cf. one of the best stanzas in *Omar Khayyam*:

"They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep;
And Bahram, that great hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his head but cannot break his sleep."

For an illustration of the ruins of Persepolis, see Breasted's *Ancient Times*, pp. 182-3.

875-92. Arnold's finest piece of description, and one never to be forgotten. This paragraph, like the last stanza of *The Scholar Gipsy*, takes the

reader right away from the story told and enables him before leaving it to view it from a distance, as it were.

PHILOMELA (p. 105)

The version of the Greek legend adopted by Arnold is as follows: Tereus of Thrace, wishing to marry Philomela, gave out that his wife Procne, sister of Philomela, was dead, shutting her up and tearing out her tongue (l. 21). But Procne wove the story of her woes and sent the web to Philomela. The two sisters in revenge served up Tereus' son Itys, or Itylus, to him at a banquet, but, when Tereus was about to revenge himself on them, they were changed, Procne into a swallow, Philomela into a nightingale. Cf. Swinburne's melodious *Itylus* for another treatment of the subject.

27. **Daulis**: in Phocis.

28. **Eugenia**: the imaginary person with the poet.

THE CHURCH OF BROU (p. 106)

PART III

I have followed Arnold's example in the volume of 1877 in separating Part III from the inferior Parts I and II. This part then appeared separately as *A Tomb among the Mountains*, though the whole poem was subsequently restored. Arnold found that he had wrongly placed Brou among the mountains, following a French writer, whereas it is one mile from Bourg in the plain of Burgundy.

The "Princely Pair" are Philibert II, Duke of Savoy, and his wife Margaret of

Austria; the former died in 1504. Arnold has taken certain liberties with the historical facts, but these concern Parts I and II (see note in G. C. Macaulay's *Poems by M. Arnold*). "The poem is in theme and scheme purely Romantic and 'nineteenth century' in its looking back to a simple and pathetic story of the Middle Age—love, bereavement and pious resignation" (Saintsbury).

14. In Arnold's version of the story the Duke had met his death while hunting; but the "no more" of l. 12 shows that the reference here is to the slaughtered game.

THE NECKAN (p. 107)

Saintsbury not unjustly describes this poem as a "weaker doublet of *The Forsaken Mer-man*."

The Neckan is the water-spirit of Teutonic mythology who desires to marry a mortal in order to be saved. Arnold later inserted two verses, one after l. 52:

"But, lo, the staff, it budded,
It green'd, it branch'd, it
waved.

'O ruth of God,' the priest
cried out,
'This lost sea-creature
saved?'"

and the other after l. 56:

"He wept: 'The earth hath
kindness,
The sea, the starry poles;
Earth, sea, and sky, and God
above—

But, ah, not human souls!'"

The poem remains rather trivial, though pathetic, partly on account of the metre.

A DREAM (p. 109)

This piece of blank verse

naturally connects itself with the other poems, mentioning "Marguerite" (l. 22); the other names "Martin" (l. 2) and "Olivia" (l. 22) do not occur elsewhere in Arnold.

REQUIESCAT (p. 110)

This little poem attains a perfection of simplicity rare even for Arnold. Landor has a few things like it, and both take us back to the Greek Anthology.

The title means "may she rest."

The poem has been set to music by Sir C. V. Stanford.

13. *cabin'd*: cf. *Macbeth* III, iv, 24—"cabin'd, cribb'd, confined."

16. *vasty* is also a Shakespearean adjective, but perhaps a little alien to the simplicity of this context.

THE SCHOLAR GIPSY (p. 111).

"There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there; and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gipsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while well exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gipsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with were not such

impostors as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others: that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned."—GLANVIL'S *Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661. (Arnold).

"*The Scholar Gipsy* and *Thyrsis* are in a mood of transient though poignant nostalgia, not in Arnold's main line of development, which is better represented by *East London* and *The Better Part* ["*Anti-Desperation*" of this edition]" (Sherman). Arnold, like his own *Scholar Gipsy*, flies at times from the books and morality which occupied so much of his thought to nature. Yet even here the *Scholar Gipsy* serves as a foil to the "sick hurry" and "divided aim" of the poet's own century.

In *The Scholar Gipsy* and *Thyrsis* "the beauty, the delicacy and affluence of colour, the fragrance and the freedom as of wide wings of winds in summer over meadow and moor, the freshness and expansion of light and the lucid air, the spring and the stream as of flowing and welling water, enlarge and exalt the pleasure and power of the whole poem. Such English-coloured verse no poet has written since Shakespeare, who chooses his field-flowers and hedgerow blossoms with the same sure and loving hand, binds them in as simple and sweet an order" (Swinburne). By these two poems Arnold has made himself the laureate of the Oxford country. He has

taught us to see its charms and provided us with a means of recalling them at will in after life. Anyone who leaves Oxford without knowing her country has missed half of what she has to offer.

The "Shepherd" of the first stanza recalls Milton's *Lycidas* and, ultimately, Theocritus, but in this poem the conventions of pastoral poetry are very lightly used. Contrast the use of nymphs, etc., in our poetry of the eighteenth century as mere external ornament, not lovingly handled.

A longer quotation from Glanvil's book, of considerable interest, is given by G. C. Macaulay. The gipsies are credited with what we should call hypnotism and thought-reading. Further notes on the topography will be found in the same place, and a map as frontispiece to George and Leigh's edition.

The metre is an invention of Arnold's, and is used again for *Thyrsis*. It consists of a sextet rhyming a b c b c a, plus a quatrain rhyming d e e d.

2. **cotes**: sheep pens; cf. Cotswolds.

4. **rack**: strain by calling you (l. 1).

10. **the quest**: for the *Scholar Gipsy*; cf. l. 62.

13. **cruise** or **cruse**: vessel; cf. the widow's "cruse of oil" in the O.T.

26. **lindens**: lime-trees.

50. **heaven-sent**: a real improvement on the "happy" of the first version.

57. **the Hurst**: Cumner Hurst; most of the places mentioned in this poem and *Thyrsis* lie on the rising ground west and south-west of Oxford.

Cumner Hurst is the highest point, very conspicuous from all sides by its fir-trees. Cf. *Thyrsis*, l. 217, which forbids us to adopt our first thought in visiting the place of identifying it with "The Tree."

59. **ingle bench**: the seat by the chimney corner.

68. Very flat meadows of deep grass are characteristic of the Thames above Oxford. Anyone who will take a boat in summer and row from Oxford to Bablock Hithe will have gone round three sides of the country described in this poem and may be able to appreciate some of its descriptions.

69. In a letter Arnold speaks of grass "muffling" the ground as typical of English as opposed to North Italian scenery.

76. In spite of some commentators *this* punt does *not* swing round with the stream, being a ferry-boat fixed on two wires; which is perhaps why Arnold finally altered this line to "As the punt's rope chops round."

For a discussion of this and other "Second Thoughts" in Arnold's poetry see E. T. Cook's interesting *Literary Recreations*, pp. 294-302.

95. **lasher**: a local word for a weir; e.g. "Sandford lasher."

147. **teen**: trouble (archaic), thrice used by Arnold in this selection.

149. The Genius of a man with the Romans was his spirit or guardian angel. Does **just-pausing** mean "who dies

just along with us" or rather "ending our life at the right moment"?

157. Cf. Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*, the superb last stanza but one:

"Thou wast not born for Death, immortal bird!" etc.

167. **scope**: aim; σκόπος.

182, etc. Carlyle is the most probable subject of this description. Tennyson had just published *In Memoriam*, but Arnold thought little of him, calling him "deficient in intellectual power." Goethe and Wordsworth were both dead; nor would the lines suit the latter. Possibly Arnold never chose to elucidate the reference (he even altered "One" to the vaguer "one") because he did not feel very attracted to Carlyle.

190. **anodynes**: remedies against pain (ὀδύνη).

194. **close-lipp'd**: a very Keatsian epithet.

208. Dido avoids Æneas, Æneid VI, 460.

232. This far-fetched simile is quite excused by its beauty and picturesqueness. The point of comparison is small.

Tyrian: Phœnicians were the great traders c. 900-700 B.C., after which they were gradually driven westward by the Greeks. Their colony, Carthage, grew as Tyre and Sidon declined.

235. I.e. a wooded hill.

244. **Midland**: poetical for Mediterranean; in Wordsworth also.

249. **Iberians**: Spaniards.

With the above poem ends our selection from the volume of 1853.

STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

(p. 118)

First printed in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1855, and in this form in the *New Poems* of 1867.

This poem is something of a return to the Arnold "note" from which the recent poems had escaped. But besides the beauty of the Alpine scenery, the biographical interest of ll. 67-72, and the fame of ll. 133-6 about Byron, Arnold puts with his wonted sympathy and insight the case for those who, in all ages, leave the busy world to pursue its own strident way, so they may only keep "the immediate jewel of their soul" untarnished. Cf. *The Buried Life* and note thereto.

The mother house of the Carthusian Order was founded at the end of the eleventh century A.D., and lies in the French Alps near Grenoble. The English Charterhouse is ultimately derived from it. The monks of the "Grande Chartreuse" were expelled by the French Government in 1903. The Grande Chartreuse had been visited also by T. Gray and Wordsworth (cf. *Prelude* VI, 436, etc.)

42. the **Host**: the body of the Lord at the Roman Catholic Mass.

62-3. Meaning that to avoid quarrels the pilgrims of each nationality were accommodated separately.

67-72. The **rigorous teachers** would be the Broad Church school of Dr. T. Arnold and Archbishop Whately, followed by Dean Stanley and Jowett among Arnold's contemporaries. They would regard the Oxford Movement of Keble and Newman and any

revival of monastic belief and practice as a "living tomb." Cf. *Westminster Abbey*, ll. 154-160.

77. **ruth**: pity, but here rather "repentance."

83. **Runic**: with the ancient lettering of the peoples of N. Europe.

102. **sciolists**: people of superficial knowledge (*scio*). Note that this line does not rhyme; Buxton Forman suggested that Arnold wrote "say" by a slip for "vow."

115. Explained in the next line; no special person intended.

121, etc. I.e. Have all the strivings of the Revolutionary era and the Romantic movement come to nothing?

135. Byron died at Missolonghi, fighting for Greek Independence, 1824.

142. Shelley was drowned off Spezzia, south of Genoa, in 1822.

146. See introductory note to *Obermann Once More*.

174. **close**: as when we speak of a cathedral close.

199. In l. 163 "we" was the poet and those like-minded with him, as opposed to the "sons of the world" (l. 161). By now, however, "we" seems to be rather more the Carthusian monks.

TO MARGUERITE (p. 125)

This first appeared in 1857, but was later included in the *Switzerland* series. Cf. note to *To My Friends*. The poem expresses the hopeless fragility of human passion, "with a vague shame at emotional abandonment."

20. **Luna**: the moon. See under "Endymion" in *Class. Dict.*

SAINT BRANDAN (p. 126)

First printed 1860; here in its final form. The legend is Celtic and mediaeval. Cf. *The Ballad of Judas Iscariot*, by Robert Buchanan in *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*.

12. Perhaps the aurora borealis, though "hurtling" is a strange epithet.

15. The iceberg is Arnold's invention.

18. fell: originally skin; then rough, matted hair.

A SOUTHERN NIGHT

(p. 129)

First published in 1861. The poet's third brother, William Delafield Arnold, Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab, died at Gibraltar on his way home in April, 1859. His wife had died shortly before in India. A touching letter of Arnold's to his mother on the occasion of his brother's death will be found in the *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 91. Arnold is almost greatest as an elegiac poet, and this elegy is as perfect as any, though it does not range so far as *Thyrsis* or *Rugby Chapel*.

1. Lagoons along the coast.

7. The Cevennes.

9. Cette: on the Gulf of Lion, west of Marseilles.

11. beacons: a verb here.

14. Arnold refers in a note to *A Summer Night*; now he is thinking of another, then it was of himself.

21. Midland: cf. *The Scholar Gipsy*, l. 244, and note.

23. cannon'd: crowned with cannons.

26. fordone: exhausted.

teen: cf. *The Scholar Gipsy*, l. 147, and note.

43. burnous: an Arab garment.

53. I.e. in the Far East.

61-72. With these lines, descriptive of the Western spirit as it seems to the East, cf. *Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse*, ll. 163-8, and these famous lines from a poem not included in this selection—*Heine's Grave*:

"Yes, we arraign her! but she
The weary Titan! with deaf
Ears, and labour-dimm'd eyes
Regarding neither to right
Nor left, goes passively by,
Staggering on to her goal;
Bearing on shoulder's immense,
Atlantéan, the load,
Wellnigh not to be borne,
Of the too vast orb of her
fate."

73. hoary: ancient and/or white (with snow).

77. Some sage: such a character as the Lama in Kipling's *Kim*.

94. Saint Louis: Louis IX of France, who led the last important Crusade in 1270.

97. For a charming example of the troubadours' work read *Aucassin and Nicolette*, which has been translated by Andrew Lang and also in "Everyman's Library."

118. moon-charmed: one of Arnold's many beautiful adjectives; cf. Keats' "branch-charmed" in the famous passage of *Hyperton*.

121. her: his wife.

THYRSIS (p. 133)

First printed April, 1866, in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

Thyrsis seems to me the

crown of Arnold's work, considered purely as poetry; within its limits it attains perfection. It is interesting to compare it with the other chief English Elegies—*Lycidas*, *Adonais*, and *In Memoriam*, each of them also to the memory of a friend who was at least something of a poet. "The *Thyrsis* of Mr. Arnold makes a third with *Lycidas* and *Adonais*. . . . The least pathetic of the three is *Adonais*, which indeed is hardly pathetic at all; it is passionate, subtle, splendid; but *Thyrsis*, like *Lycidas*, has a quiet and tender undertone which gives it something of sacred. Shelley brings fire from heaven, but these bring also 'the meed of some melodious tear.' There is a grace ineffable, a sweet sound and sweet favour of things past, in the old beautiful use of the language of shepherds, of flocks and pipes; the spirit is none the less sad and sincere because the body of the poem has put on this dear familiar raiment of romance; because the crude and naked sorrow is veiled and chastened with soft shadows and sounds of a 'land that is very far off'; because the verse remembers and retains a perfume and an echo of Grecian flutes and flowers" (Swinburne: *Essays and Studies*, p. 155).

Arnold writes to his mother in April, 1866: "Tell him that the diction of the poem was modelled on that of Theocritus, whom I have been much reading during the two years this poem has been forming itself. . . . The images are all from actual observation. . . . The cuckoo on the wet June morning I heard in the garden at Woodford, and all those three stanzas you like are reminiscences of Woodford. Edward [his brother] has, I think, fixed

on the two stanzas I like best myself in 'O easy access' and 'And long the way appears.' I also like 'Where is the girl?' and the stanza before it, but it is because they bring certain places and moments before me. . . . It is probably too quiet a poem for the general taste, but I think it will stand wear." Not only has it stood the wear of years, but to one reader, at any rate, the tenth or twentieth reading has given more pleasure than the first. To Shairp Arnold wrote: "It has long been in my head to connect Clough with that Cumner country, and when I began I was carried irresistibly into this form; you say, truly, however, that there is much in Clough (the whole *prophet* side, in fact) which one cannot deal with in this way, and one has the feeling, if one reads the poem as a memorial poem, that not enough is said about Clough in it. . . ." Yet, just because the poem is not too much about Clough, but is filled with the purest spirit of the English country-side, it will always live as long as poetry is cared for and carry with it Clough's memory.

In letters of 1885 Arnold wrote: "I think Oxford is still, on the whole, the place in the world to which I am most attached," and, "On Friday I got out to Hinksey and up the hill to within sight of the Cumner firs. I cannot describe the effect which this landscape always has on me—the hillside with its valleys, and Oxford in the great Thames valley below."

Once more space does not permit many topographical notes, and I must refer any to whom the scenes are not known personally, and who yet wish details, to the full notes in

Macaulay's edition. Some may like to know that the Medici Society publish a beautifully printed edition of these two poems with charming water-colours of the Oxford country by W. R. Flint.

Reference should be made throughout to *The Scholar Gipsy*.

1. **man** : as opposed to nature.

5. **twisted** : set at an angle, as often in old houses.

10. Arnold speaks of himself and Clough under the shepherd names of Virgil's seventh eclogue as Corydon (l. 80) and Thyrsis.

12. The identification of the tree is, unfortunately, very doubtful. There was a correspondence in the *Times Literary Supplement* in November, 1917 or 1918, on the subject revealing much difference of opinion. A. C. Bradley wrote that "the tree commonly identified as Arnold's tree" used to be and perhaps still is visible from the train a little before it enters Oxford Station from the south. It was more or less umbrella-shaped and stood out on the sky-line. About 1877 I asked Matthew Arnold whether the tree thus visible was the Tree of *Thyrsis* and he answered without hesitation, "Yes." But even so, Arnold has, with poetic licence, included more in the view than is actually visible from that one spot.

20. Cf. Arnold's magnificent apostrophe to Oxford in prose, at the end of the Preface to *Essays in Criticism* (*First Series*), "which must for ever conciliate all sons of hers and all gracious outsiders

to its author, just as it turns generation after generation of her enemies sick with an agonized grin."

35. **our shepherd-pipes** stand for "our poetry" by the pastoral convention.

37. It was nine years since Arnold had published his last volume of poems.

40. Clough left Oxford after holding his fellowship only a few years. There is a good recent monograph on *Arthur Hugh Clough*, by T. I. Osborne (Constable).

45. **silly** : simple (archaic).

48-9. E.g. Clough's poem *Dipsychus*.

82-90. These lines are similar to ll. 121-133 in the elegy of Moschus for Bion (*Idyll*, III), which will be found translated in G. C. Macaulay's edition. The whole piece may be seen in Andrew Lang's translation of *Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus* (G.T.S.).

86. **Pluto** : ruler of Hades ; his queen was Proserpine.

90. Cf. *Memorial Verses*, l. 38, and note.

91-100. W. P. Ker called this verse "the heart of the poem" with its mingling of "the old convention of *Lycidas*, the trust in the Sicilian muse, and the blend of the Greek pastoral mythology with the life of the English friends in their great country house." (Arnold once said that he and his friends treated Oxford as "a great country house").

95. Cf. Milton's lines (favourites with Arnold) :

"Or that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine
gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by
gloomy Dis [Pluto]
Was gathered."

Arnold accents Proserpine,
Milton Prosérpine (Latin, Pros-
erpina).

109. **Ensham** : Eynsham.

117. **coronals** : crowns, gar-
lands (but notice how the
less common word helps to
make such a beautiful line).
Cf. Wordsworth's *Immortality*
Ode, l. 40.

135. **sprent** : sprinkled.

137. **pausefully** : so as to check
it.

167. **Arno** : the river of Flor-
ence, where Clough was
buried.

177. **great Mother** : cf. *Youth*
of Nature, l. 77. The worship
of Cybele was known in
Rome, but her followers
roamed the Asiatic hills
rather than the Apennines.
Perhaps Arnold means Nature

as in *Westminster Abbey*,
l. 86, he means Demeter by
the "Mighty Mother."

184-190. Two classical stories
are combined. According to
one Daphnis forfeited his life
in a contest with Lityerses, a
Phrygian king, at reaping
corn; according to the other
he was blinded by a nymph
whose love he would not
return, but was restored to
life and taken up to Heaven
by Hermes. The "Lityerses
song" was one of the plain-
tive strains of Greek popular
poetry.

202. **Shy to illumine** : reluctant
to shine forth.

222. The "happy country
tone" is seen most of all in
Clough's "Long Vacation
Pastoral" *The Bothie of*
Tober na Vuolich, as in
Thyrsis, but in *Dipsychus*
the "stormy note" appears.

234-6. Cf. *Lines Written in*
Kensington Gardens, last two
verses.

We enter now on the volume of *New Poems*, published in 1867. In
the group of sonnets which follow none are of the rank of Wordsworth's,
Milton's, or Keats' greater sonnets; yet few to whom Arnold appeals
at all will not be glad to have a fairly large selection from the work
which shows us the Arnold of middle life, whom we get to know in
the *Letters* and the *Note Books*. They are full of that "criticism of
life" which seemed to their author the chief function of poetry.

A PICTURE AT NEWSTEAD (p. 141)

1. **Newstead**, in Nottingham-
shire, the home of Byron's
family.

3. Cf. *Memorial Verses*, ll.
10-14.

RACHEL. III (p. 141)

This is the last of three
sonnets about the great actress,

whom as a young man Arnold
had followed to Paris and
"never missed one night for a
whole season."

7. **A-Kempis** : author of *The*
Imitation of Christ, in Latin.

ANTI-DESPERATION (p. 143) Later re-named *The Beller* *Part*.

1. **boundless hopes** of orthodox religion. Arnold himself could not accept the miraculous element in Christianity, but his life was passed in the spirit of this sonnet. His belief in a personal immortality was far less confident than Browning's.

WORLDLY PLACE (p. 144)

3. **Marcus Aurelius**: Roman Emperor, A.D. 161-180, one of the most interesting figures of the ancient world. See, first, Arnold's most sympathetic essay on him in *Essays in Criticism (First Series)*, and the translation of his *Meditations* in the "Golden Treasury Series."

THE DIVINITY (p. 145)

- 6-7. I.e. carried the day.
8. "Gilbert de la Porré at the Council of Rheims in 1148" (Arnold)
11. Cf. Arnold's much criticized definition of God as "a stream of tendency, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness."

THE GOOD SHEPHERD WITH THE KID (p. 145)

2. **Tertullian**: a great Church father, c. A.D. 150-220.
3. The Montanists.
4. **lave**: wash.
10. **suffused**: filled with tears.
13. **hasty**: i.e. rough.

AUSTERITY OF POETRY (p. 146)

1. Giacomone di Todi, by whom there is, e.g., a beautiful poem on the Crucifixion to be found in *The Oxford Book of Italian Verse*.

MONICA'S LAST PRAYER (p. 146)

Monica was the mother of St. Augustine, and the whole story on which the sonnet is based will be found in his *Confessions*, Book IX, Chapter XI (numerous English translations).

CALAIS SANDS (p. 147)

Wordsworth has a fine sonnet with the same title.

I have the authority of Arnold's daughter, Lady Sandhurst, for recording that the subject of this poem is her mother, of whom Arnold, before his engagement, thus sought a sight.

5. **Ardres** is ten miles from Calais; near it took place in 1520 the meeting of Henry VIII and Francis I, known as "The Field of the Cloth of Gold."

34. **storied**: with which so many legends are connected.

DOVER BEACH (p. 148)

"Here you have that passionate interpretation of life, which is so different a thing from the criticism of it; that marvellous pictorial effect to which the art of line and colour itself is commonplace and *banal*, and which prose literature never attains except by a *tour de force*; that almost more marvellous accompaniment of vowel and consonant music, independent of the sense but reinforcing it, which is the glory of English poetry among all, and of nineteenth-century poetry among all English poetries" (Saintsbury).

15. The passage in the *Antigone* of Sophocles to which Arnold probably refers is quoted and translated in *The Influence of the Classics*, etc., p. 16. Greek poets are almost as fond of the sea as English, both people being seafaring.

THE TERRACE AT BERNE (p. 149)

This poem deserves inclusion for the lovely recollection of Swiss scenery rather than for its suggestion as to Marguerite's fate.

6. **The Jungfrau** is one of the chief mountains in the Bernese Oberland.

9. The lakes of Thun and Brienz.

45-8. These lines recall Clough's *Qua cursum ventus*, beginning "As ships becalmed at eve that lay."

STANZAS COMPOSED AT CARNAC (p. 151)

Written soon after the death of his brother (cf. *A Southern Night*). "I thought of Willy the other day at Carnac while I looked over the perfectly still and bright Atlantic by Quiberon Bay and saw the sails passing in the distance where he would have passed had he lived to come home. . . . I went to Carnac to see the Druidical stones, which are very solemn and imposing. The sea is close by, with the sickle-shaped peninsula of Quiberon, where the emigrants landed and were beaten by Hoche, sweeping out into it" (*Letters*, I, p. 98).

An illustration of the neolithic avenues for processions, or race-course, at Carnac in the south of Brittany is given in Breasted's *Ancient Times*, p. 31.

7-8. Cf. *Tristram and Iseult*, III, ll. 151-6.

28. **loyal**: French Royalists were landing from English ships, 1795.

38. **the Rock of Spain**: Gibraltar.

PALLADIUM (p. 153)

This was a statue of Pallas,

on the preservation of which the safety of Troy depended; it was stolen by the Greeks and Troy fell. The names of people and places are from Homer; see *Class. Dict.*

12. Cf. *The Buried Life*, ll. 30-76.

THE LAST WORD (p. 154)

16. I.e. having fallen in the *attack* on the forts of folly; as Arnold spent the latter half of his life attacking the forts of the "Philistines" in his prose works.

RUGBY CHAPEL (p. 156)

"Arnold is most bracing, when he stands by a grave."

This, without being Arnold's greatest poem, is perhaps the most calculated to leave a permanent impression on the reader. In spite of the loose, unrhymed metre, the moral fervour and passionate feeling which pervade it make it great. Lest anyone should think the impression of Dr. Arnold due to filial piety, they should recall the work of two pupils—Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (especially the end) and Stanley's *Life of Arnold*. Charlotte Brontë spoke of him as "the greatest and best man of his time." When one passes to Mr. Lytton Strachey's study in *Eminent Victorians* one sees how essentially false is the impression that cleverness without sympathy or personal experience of the subject may give.

Dr. Thomas Arnold died suddenly in June, 1842, and was buried in the school chapel.

57. "But this is just what makes him (Dr. Arnold) great—that he was not only a good man saving his own soul by righteousness, but that he

carried so many others with him in his hand, and saved them, if they would let him, along with himself" (*Letters*, I, p. 48).

73-144. This long-sustained metaphor is appropriate as well as fine, because Thomas Arnold had so often been the leader on mountain excursions; cf. *Resignation*.

148. **else**: i.e. who, but for what I have known of thee, would have seemed unreal.

190. Cf. *The Lord's Messengers*, not included in this selection because the thought of it is more finely embodied in this superb paragraph.

OBERMANN ONCE MORE (p. 162)

"Obermann" is Arnold's name for Étienne Pivert de Senancour (1770-1846), who wrote "Obermann" a volume of letters, chiefly from Switzerland treating of God, nature, and the human soul. Arnold wrote a slight essay on him, which was first reprinted in the Oxford edition of *Essays by Matthew Arnold*. But "Obermann" appears to be less interesting than Arnold's poetry about him; for he has all Arnold's melancholy without his other qualities. In the 1852 volume there had appeared a poem for which, unfortunately, there is not space in this book, *Stanzas in Memory of the Author of Obermann*. A comparison of the two poems shows how much more hopeful Arnold's attitude to life had become in the interval. Inside a charming framework of Alpine scenery, ll. 1-36, 321-end (which alone would justify the inclusion of the poem in our selection

to any lover of Switzerland), Arnold puts into the mouth of Obermann a review of the world's spiritual history—the Roman Empire (ll. 85-112), the rise of Christianity, and the Ages of Faith (ll. 113-176). Disillusionment, and the renewal of hope (ll. 281-320). There is more thought than lyrical power in the piece, but lines like 109-112 or 175-6 are not easily forgotten.

1. **Glion**: above the Lake of Geneva at its eastern end and below the Rochers de Naye (l. 332). The castle of Chillon (l. 8) is on the lake below; cf. Byron's sonnet (in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*).

20. **the pass**: the Col de Jaman which leads from Montreux to Montbovon, now traversed by the Montreux and Bernese Oberland Railway (M.O.B.). The Dent de Jaman (l. 31) rises above the pass, and Les Avants (l. 14) is on the way up.

25-6. "The river Saane becomes the Savine below Montbovon" (Arnold). The latter is the town visited by Byron (l. 24).

43. **eremite**: hermit (Greek, *ἐρημος*, solitary). Cf. Keats' sonnet:

"Bright star! Would I were
steadfast as thou art . . .
Like nature's patient, sleep-
less Eremite."

179. **to**: completely closed.

185. I.e. the Psalms.

336. **The Valais**: the canton on either side of the Rhone above the Lake of Geneva; especially the Pennine Alps, to which the dome-shaped Mt. Vélan above the Great St. Bernard belongs.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

(p. 173)

This poem was first published in 1882. It is still copyright, and I am much indebted to Messrs. Macmillan for allowing me to print it here. In its use of "the grand style" and the rhythm of the first three lines of each stanza the poem recalls Milton's *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*.

"I am not sure that you will care very much about the A. P. S. poem, but he himself would have taken great delight in the use I have made of a lovely legend of primitive Westminster, which up to the Reformation was as universally a favourite as the legends of Alfred, but in our day is known to hardly a soul, though A. P. S. knew it well himself." "Many will think, no doubt, as they did about *Thyrsis* at first, that there should have been more of direct personal effusion as to the departed and as to my feelings towards him. However, one can only do these things in one's own way" (*Letters*, II, pp. 227, 229). It is in fact what gives Arnold's elegies such strength and permanence, that they do not remain with the dead in the tomb but rise with the spirit that lives. Notice how skillfully Arnold uses the idea of light all through the poem from the consecration light (l. 6) and the Saviour's light (l. 61) to Stanley as a child of light (l. 74). The Broad Church School especially recognized the claims of the *intellect* in religion. "Sweetness and Light" was a constant phrase in Arnold's prose writing; see especially *Culture and Anarchy*.

5. "Ailred of Rievaulx and several other writers assert

that Sebert, King of the East Saxons and nephew of Ethelbert, founded the Abbey of Westminster very early in the seventh century. Sulcardus, who lived in the time of William the Conqueror, gives a minute account of the miracle supposed to have been worked at the consecration of the Abbey. The church had been prepared against the next day for dedication (to St. Peter). On the night preceding, St. Peter appeared on the opposite side of the water to a fisherman, desiring to be conveyed to the farther shore. Having left the boat, St. Peter ordered the fisherman to wait, promising him a reward on his return. An innumerable host from heaven accompanied the apostle singing choral hymns, while everything was illuminated with a supernatural light. The dedication having been completed, St. Peter returned to the fisherman, quieted his alarm at what had passed, and announced himself as the apostle" (Part of Arnold's quotation from a historian of monasticism).

9. Stanley wrote *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey*.

55-6. I.e. the Abbey came to be used as the burial place for famous men.

61. Cf. "I am the light of the world," etc.

64-5. I.e. Christianity became clouded by abstruse theological speculation or by a host of miracles.

71-80. These lines refer, of course, to Dean Stanley. His character suggested the "Arthur" of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

85. Demophoon, son of Celeus, King of Eleusis; see the Homeric Hymn to Demeter (the "Mighty Mother" of l. 86) charmingly translated by Pater in *Greek Studies*, pp. 83-91.

114. **Cithaeron**: a mountain on the border between Attica and Bœotia.

134-5. "Agamedes and Trophonus, the builders of the temple of Apollo at Delphi. See Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium*, c. 14" (Arnold).

155. **cecily**: darkness. In a letter Arnold mentions that he thought he had introduced

this word into English from Lat. *cecitas* and Fr. *cécité*, comparing levity from *levitas* and *lévité*, but then found it had been used by an Elizabethan, Hooker (*Letters*, II, p. 229).

160. **pullulating**: springing up and developing. Arnold is here referring to the Anglo-Catholic movement, with its renewed emphasis on rites and ceremonies.

168. Stanley wrote the life of Arnold of Rugby.

170. **let**: hindrance (Shakespearean).

PRINTED BY
JARROLD AND SONS LTD.
NORWICH

